

**IT'S ALL ABOUT THE BUSES!**

# Bus & Coach PRESERVATION

Inside this month:

**RIBBLE ATLANTEANS**



**THE EDEN REVIVAL**



**A STAGECOACH STANDARD  
MINIBUS RESTORED**



**GASH DAIMLER PROGRESS**



Plus: all the latest news  
and reviews.



# MELLOW YELLOW

**NORTHERN OLYMPIAN IN PTE COLOURS**



Vol 20 No 2 JULY 2017

£4.60



## WELL WORTH WAITING FOR!

Worths Coaches was established in 1922 in the Oxfordshire village of Enstone by Thomas (Dickie) Edmund Worth, and is still in existence today. Dickie Worth began by repairing motorbikes, bicycles and lawn mowers.

He later progressed to running Ford Model T taxis, and then to charabancs running day trips to the coast. The business grew and grew, its premises on the A44 at Enstone becoming a familiar sight to passing enthusiasts. Regular services were established, the company continuing to operate to Oxford until 2004 and to Witney until 2008.

Stagecoach now operate these services. Worths, however, continue to undertake private hire excursion and tour work, currently maintaining a fleet of 12 coaches.



**MAIN PICTURE:** Our main picture shows Plaxton Elite III-bodied Ford R1114 OUD 322P, a 53-seater new in 1975. Some two years later the immaculate coach is seen in Charlbury on the regular service to Oxford. PRESBUS ARCHIVE

**ABOVE:** The same day, 20 May 1977, Plaxton Elite II-bodied AEC Reliance TUD 322L, a 57-seater, which had been new in 1973, pauses in Charlbury, whilst also taking a turn on the Enstone–Oxford service. PRESBUS ARCHIVE





**BELOW:** In a scene captured on film in Stratford-upon-Avon in 1996, New to Worthy's 1980 Plaxton Supreme IV-bodied Volvo B58 FUD 322V keeps company with B123 UUD, a Plaxton Paramount 3200-bodied Leyland Tiger, which had been new to City of Oxford as its 123 in 1984. This coach was to see later service with Confidence of Leicester, whilst FUD 322V was to pass to C&G Coaches of Cambridge. PHILIP LAMB



## NEWS PLUS

The latest news from the world of bus preservation and beyond.

## MELLOW YELLOW

A Northern Olympian has been restored in PTE colours. PHILIP LAMB reports.

## ON THE ROAD

DAVID JUKES presents another selection of senior buses and coaches on the open road.

## EDEN REVIVAL

Graeme Scarlett has not only revived one of the North-East's most-loved independents, but has also celebrated its 90th birthday and restored one of the original vehicles. NICK LARKIN reports.

## COACHING CLASSICS: WITH THE BLUEBIRD

We take a look at Scotland's Bluebird Coaches.

## THE SMALLEST STANDARD

The Stagecoach Group's smallest standard bus of the early-1990s was the Alexander AM Sprint-bodied Mercedes Benz 709D. Former Stagecoach Hants & Surrey No 879 (K879 ODY) is now preserved by Mark Turner as DAVID JUKES reports.

## AFTER THEY WERE FAMOUS: REAR ENGINED SALOONS

The late 1960s saw the rise of the rear-engined single-decker. By way of a celebration of the genre, we bring you this month some examples to enter the strange and varied world of the non-PSV.

## SCARBOROUGH IN THE SUN

The second Scarborough rally and running day enjoyed its fair share of sunshine. PHILIP LAMB was there to record the event.

## MAGNIFICENT MIDDLESBROUGH

The Teesside 500 Groups annual running day brought forth a grand selection of vehicles. PHILIP LAMB reports.

## NATIONAL EXPRESS STYLE

A former United Tiger now provides luxury travel to rallies for its preservationist owner.

## THE PROVEN ONE

After seven years' restoration Ribble Leyland Atlantean 1397 returned to the road in 2015 with the Ribble Vehicle Preservation Trust. SIMON GILL and owner GERARD BUTLER bring us the story.

## RETURN JOURNEY: RIBBLE RECALLED

This month we bring you a selection of Ribble buses from the 1960s, '70s and '80s.

## GASH DAIMLER UPDATE: A STAIRWAY YO HEAVEN

GRAHAM BROWN continues the story of the restoration of his 1949 W Gash & Sons Roberts-bodied Daimler CVD6 DD6 (KNN 959).

## THE MODEL PAGE

NIGEL APPLEFORD brings us the second part of his overview of EFE's standard-floor Dennis Dart.

## OFF ROUTE

The 50th anniversary of a small municipal's demise, the 51st birthday of an RML and a great use for a restoration project are all celebrated by NICK LARKIN this month.

## BUSMART

B&CP's comprehensive advertising section, where you can buy or sell any bus-related item.

Cover: **Seen leaving Middlesbrough bus station, Northern Leyland Olympian (C656 LJR) has recently been restored by a father and son team. Read about them and the bus on page 13.** PHILIP LAMB

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# YARDLEY WOOD BUS CLUB

NX Historic Society, Yardley Wood Bus Club  
& Transport Museum Wythall

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21 Leith Links

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## UPDATED RALLY DATES FOR 2017 SEASON

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Wythall, Bank Holiday Event  
4 Jun NWWRT Museum  
Kirby, Merseyside  
Saturday 10 Jun Kings Park,  
Boscombe, Bournemouth  
11 Jun Southsea Spectacular  
18 Jun Transport Museum  
Wythall

16 Jul Alton Hampshire  
Bus & Running Day  
23 Jul Rotherham  
Open & Running Day  
30 Jul Oxford  
Vintage Bus Rally  
6 Aug Gosport  
19/20th Aug Lathalmond  
Bus Museum

**SERVICE WITH A SMILE AT YWBC**



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# We'll tell you what we want...

What we really, really, want for 'On the Road' are pictures placing the mature bus and coach in their operating environment — urban centres, rural landscapes and the like. We are very grateful for the pictures received to date but 'wannabee' able to use more than the standard front three-quarter record shot to spice up the feature.

Some of our contributors have looked at the bigger picture — one deserved reproduction as a two-page spread in an earlier issue — and we want more of the same!

We know only too well old habits die hard — I am a record shot expert with 30 years' practice of the art, but do please consider taking your pictures with a greater distance between object and camera to capture more of the surrounding streetscape or countryside. Try not to use a wider-angle lens than you would usually use; too wide an angle and the verticals cease to be and the object vehicle becomes horribly distorted. (On a digital camera a focal length below 35 is a definite no-no — Ed.

Since 'Rally Round' and 'Still in Service' reached their final termini,

'On the Road' is your principal chance to contribute photographically to B&CP. We simply wish to showcase the best pictures of preserved and older in-service vehicles doing what they do best — carrying passengers on the public highway. A place does remain for the standard record shot, so do please continue to send them if you are unable to capture a greater part of the surroundings for whatever reason. May I encourage you to look at the published bus and coach photographs taken during past generations? It is arguably the street scene that grabs more attention than the subject vehicle in many cases. Let's provide something similar for the next generations.

There is not a national shortage of photographers judging by the number of cameras evident at the majority of running days and enthusiast events; just an apparent shortage of submissions. Don't rely on somebody else submitting that picture — we would rather be sent a similar image twice (and, believe me, it does occasionally occur) than not at all.

Help us make 'On the Road' a celebration of the art of bus photography.  
DAVID JUKES



Picture: WILLIAM J. SPENCER



## Two Firsts at Quorn

The Leicester Transport Heritage Trust held another very successful running day jointly with the Great Central Railway at Quorn & Woodhouse station yard on Saturday 22 April. The Trust recorded 2,547 passenger journeys on three free bus services, almost a 19% increase on last year.

This year saw several firsts; one being the opportunity to ride on the Delaine Heritage Trust's Yeates-bodied Leyland Titan PD3/1 No 50 (RCT 3), into Loughborough, which was making its first return to the town since it was built there in June 1960.

The other 'first' saw Leicester City Transport AEC Bridgemaster/Park Royal

217 (217 AJF) running several trips crewed by two FirstGroup Managing Directors with James Freeman, MD of First West of England driving and Nigel Eggleton, MD of First Midlands conducting. James Freeman is one of the co-owners of 217 along with Rupert Clarke, Mike Cooke and Simon Gill.

LTHT Chairman Richard Worman said: 'I am delighted that the Bus and Rail event held jointly with the Great Central Railway has become such a popular addition to the heritage transport calendar. Many visitors made long journeys to attend the event with a record number of bus trips being enjoyed. I am particularly grateful to the private vehicle owners and visiting buses

for making their vehicles available, and for all the hard work put in by the Trust's volunteers. Now it's all hands on deck to prepare for the Leicester Heritage Bus Running Day on Sunday 3 September.' Report and pictures: SIMON GILL

Below left: **Delaine 50 (RCT 3) a Leyland Titan PD3/1 with Yeates body at Loughborough railway station during its first return to the town since it was built. The works of one-time Yeates competitor Brush can be seen behind the station.**

Below: **Ready for their first journey on Leicester City Transport AEC Bridgemaster 217 are, from left to right, James Freeman and Nigel Eggleton.**



## Blackpool Tram launched at Crich

Blackpool 236 was launched back in official public service at Crich on Tuesday 25 April 2017.

The restoration was undertaken during the closed winter period on site at the Museum; the main focus being on the seats and interior paintwork. The old toffee paint was carefully stripped to reveal the original teak wood, which has now been varnished.

Team member Matthew Linaker said: 'The most difficult part of the work was stripping the seats back to the original teak, which was

painstaking. The best part was how the original wood looked when finished — it justified the hard graft we put in'.

The interior paintwork on the sides of the tram was changed from a toffee colour, back to its original chocolate colour.

Our picture shows from the left: Sandy Williamson (workshop volunteer), Matthew Linaker (coach painter), Dr Mike Galer (general manager Crich Tramway Village), Alan Barber (TMS President) and David Frodsham (board member).





# 3D scan for British bus model

Rapido Trains Inc, Canada's foremost manufacturer of model trains and buses has recently expanded into the British model market. Its recent offerings in OO and N gauge have both won 'Model of the Year' in the British Model Railway Awards.

Rapido's recently-announced 1:87 scale Fishbowl New Look Bus has turned the North American model bus market on its head, offering a level of detail never before seen in a small-scale bus, including full interior with individual seats, separate grab poles, steerable front wheels and working lighting. Now Rapido is turning to the British model bus market with its first 1:76 scale British bus model. The model will be announced at the Rapido Bus 3D Scanning Event on 16 July 2017 at the Transport Museum, Wythall.

Rapido will carry out a 3D scan of a real classic British double-decker bus in order to ensure that the model matches the actual shape precisely. Rapido Managing Director, Jason Shron, will be on hand to answer questions about the model, the model making process, and the history of the Canadian firm.

Classic Birmingham City Transport and Midland Red buses will be giving rides on the day, complimentary to all museum visitors, who will also receive complimentary badges and other 'Rapido' swag. Complimentary tea and coffee will be provided, and light refreshments will be available to purchase. The Museum is at Chapel Lane, Wythall, Worcestershire B47 6JX. The event will be open from 12.00–15.00 with regular admission prices: Adult £4 child £2 and Family (2+2) £10 including free bus rides.

Web link: <http://www.rapidouk.com/rapido-bus-3d-scanning-event/>



## McDonalds Routemaster

Routemasters appear all over the world, many have been exported for various uses over the years. One such bus was recently seen in Irschenberg at a service area on the Autobahn 8 in Southern Germany.

However there's a bit of a mystery surrounding this one. It has a registration plate of CUV 136C on the rear but no plate on the front, but it has the fleet No RM1682 stencilled on the front of

the bonnet, which should make the registration 682 DYE.

Correspondent Terry Button has consulted the Internet and one website shows both RM2136 (CUV 136C) and RM1682 (682 DYE) as being exported to Germany with RM2136 as being at this particular site. Terry suggests that the fleet number has been applied erroneously – unless anyone knows different?



## 'Dad's Army' bus to Bressingham

DX 9547, a Gilford AS6 with Taylor body new to Rivers of Ipswich in 1931, and later with Jack Mulley of Ixworth has been put on loan for initially 12 months with the Bressingham Steam Museum as part of the museum's 'Dad's Army' display alongside the Jones Butchers van, a steam roller and other vehicles from the series. The Gilford was supplied for the series

and later film by Jack during the 1960/70s.

Although the Gilford has made a few appearances at rallies, including Showbus in 2015, due to the age and fragility of the vehicle, owner Malcolm Skevington has not ventured far with it. It is not expected to be run whilst at Bressingham and will remain a static exhibit.

Report and picture: JOHN WAKEFIELD





# Bus renovated by those who restored it 35 years ago

One of the 30 all-Leyland Titan PD2 buses that carried thousands of people around the city of Leicester for many years is back at First Leicester's bus garage for a mechanical and bodywork overhaul.

In 1975, bus No 154 was

sold to a farmer to transport workers and strawberries in fields around West Butterwick, Scunthorpe. The condition of the bus gradually deteriorated over time, but it was rescued in 1981 and taken back to Leicester City Transport then

headquarters on Abbey Park Road.

During 1982 apprentices at Leicester City Transport restored the bus to its former glory, and now 35 years on, the same engineers are passing on their skills to new apprentices

who will undertake new restoration work and get it ready in time to attend scheduled heritage events over the summer season.

Nigel Eggleton, Managing Director for First Leicester said: 'Milestones don't come around very often, but this one is definitely an event that deserves recognition. Our engineers who helped restore the vehicle 35 years ago are still employed by First Leicester and are passing on their skills to our new generation of apprentices. They will be shown how to maintain and preserve a vintage bus, which is a totally different procedure from maintaining and looking after buses from our modern fleet. Our partners at the Leicester Transport Heritage Trust do a fantastic job in looking after the vehicle presenting it at shows and heritage events around the country. It is important for us as a local business which ran these buses all those years ago and for the city of Leicester, that we look after our heritage for everyone to enjoy.'

Richard Worman, Chairman of Restoration Director LTHT, said: 'I would like to thank our friends and partners at First Leicester for this tremendous opportunity. A totally unique set of circumstances where a vehicle goes back to the same skilled engineers that restored the bus all those years ago and pass on traditional skills to a newer generation.'

'The work will help conserve this piece of Leicester's Transport Heritage for generations to come and also play a part in shaping the skills of the new apprentices at First, a great example of old and new working in partnership.'

Picture (courtesy First Leicester): MIKE SEWELL





# Gosport's Buses & Trams

The Provincial Society has provided a display reflecting all forms of Gosport's road-based passenger transport from the 1870s to the present day at the Gosport Gallery, Walpole Road (off High Street), PO12 1NS, which forms part of the Hampshire Cultural Trust's portfolio of museums and galleries across the county.

'Gosport's Buses and Trams' examines the town's public transport from horse-drawn trams to the latest Eclipse buses and opened to the public on 6 May. The exhibition is open Mondays–Saturdays until 8 July with free entry to all.

A preview on 5 May was attended by the Mayor of Gosport, Councillor Lynn Hook, the Leader of Gosport Borough Council, Councillor Mark Hook, and The Provincial Society's Honorary President, Richard Soper (formerly managing director of First Hampshire & Dorset), who gave a brief introductory speech. Said Richard: 'In the late-19th and early-20th centuries, public transport was very much part of this community's lifeblood. When Britannia ruled the waves, the people of Gosport who were central to making that possible, were living and working by bus right here.'

'We are looking here at the progress made to the present day,' he continued. 'Eclipse is one of the best examples of modern bus operation with services running to Fareham using the highway and a dedicated road, and is producing significant growth.'

The Provincial Society is providing free tours using preserved buses on 13 and 27 May, 3 and 10 June, 1 and 8 July. Vintage and modern buses will be on display in

nearby Lawrence Square on Saturdays throughout the exhibition's duration.

There will also be a talk by Chris Richardsen, The Provincial Society's Archivist, at the Local Studies Centre at 19.00 on 14 June. Tickets are £5, obtainable from the Gosport Gallery.

For further information see: [www.provincialsociety.org](http://www.provincialsociety.org) and [www.hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk](http://www.hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk)  
Pictures: DAVID JUKES



Above: **With part of the Exhibition display are, from left: Councillor Mark Hook (Leader of the Council), Councillor Lynn Hook (Mayor of Gosport), Richard Soper (Honorary President, The Provincial Society), John Sherwin (Chair, The Provincial Society) and Darren Marshall (Trustee Chair, The Provincial Society).**



On display in Lawrence Square on 6 May are former Gosport & Fareham No 57 (EHO 869), a 1943 Guy Arab II with 1953 convertible open-top coach-bus Reading bodywork and First Hampshire & Dorset 67186 (YX66 WCD), a 2016 Alexander Dennis Enviro 200 MMC.



## Gange calls it a day

Gange Coaches of Place Road, Cowes, IoW ceased trading in May 2017 due to the ill health of proprietor, John Gange, following almost 45 years of trading.

John started the company with his wife Julia in 1973 initially offering private hire work, but following deregulation, undertook local bus services between 1985 and 1989, during which time John took issue with Southern Vectis via the Office of Fair Trading to allow independent operators to use the bus stations at Ryde and Newport.

Gange operated several older coaches which are for sale and may be of interest to preservationists, these include: 4817 F, a Leyland Tiger/Duple 320 new to Moss Sandown, D126 YDL, a Mercedes-Benz 608D/Plaxton Mini Supreme new to Gange and one of only two now left in PSV service and F72 GYB, a Setra 210H new to Silver Coach Lines, Edinburgh. All the above are currently roadworthy with class 6 MoTs.

Out of service vehicles: R996 RHL, a Mercedes-Benz 0817L with SC Coachcraft

Vision body new to Gange, but laid up since 2004 due to a broken windscreen, B489 JDL, a Bedford YNT/Plaxton Paramount and JDL 724W, a Bedford YMT/Duple Dominant II.

Also available are a number of Bedford and Ford R-series spares and workshop manuals, plus some spare windscreens. Interested parties should contact Julia Gange on 01983 296666.

Report: JOHN WAKEFIELD

Pictures: TERRY JONES



## Whippet Olympians get new lease of life

Two ex-Whippet Coaches Volvo Olympians, P343/8 ROO acquired by Andrews Coaches of Foxton, Cambridgeshire just prior to the sale of Whippet to Tower Transit in 2014, have been given a repaint with Andrews Coaches fleet names

for continued use on school contracts. Andrew Miller said that the buses were giving good reliable service so he decided to extend their life with a repaint and company branding.

The Olympians were new to Harris Bus, West Thurrock

in July 1997. Andrews Coaches is part of the Miller Brothers Group that also includes Mil-Ken of Littleport and Neals of Isleham.

Report: JOHN WAKEFIELD  
Picture: ANDREW MILLER





## New Exhibition for New Season at Crich Tramway Village

New for 2017 is the 'Arms to Armistice' exhibition, which is the second in the series of exhibitions to examine how the outbreak of the World War I affected the tramways of Britain.

Crich Tramway Village Curator, Laura Waters said: 'The exhibition explores the latter years of the war from mid-1916 through to the Armistice in 1918, following on from the previous exhibition 'Tramway Tommies and Clippie Girls', which looked at the early war years. 'Arms to Armistice' reveals how the increased employment of women on the trams led to them taking on more responsibilities and pushing the boundaries of the roles that they were able to step into'.

Reflecting on the hard work put in by both staff and volunteers in preparing the exhibitions, Laura commented: 'There are more than a thousand names on a wall, all of whom were listed on the roll of honours in the trade journals during the World War I, merely a fraction of those who lost their lives. I am really proud of everyone who has been involved over the last three years with research and development for our World War I activities and exhibitions at the museum. But for me that wall represents exactly why we chose to do the exhibitions and recruitment tram, it's all about remembering and acknowledging the sacrifice and changes that occurred during that period'.

Crich Tramway Village is open daily from 18 March to 5 November 2017, 10.00–17.30 (last admission 16.00).

The picture depicts a Birmingham tram conductress.



## Ipswich bus escapes from playground

Former Ipswich Borough Transport No 2 (HDX 905N), a 1975 Leyland Atlantean with Roe bodywork which, until recently in use as a library at a junior school in Laughton Common, near Rotherham, was recently purchased by the owner of Quickmission recovery, and is now located on the outskirts of Sheffield.

Reader Dave Robinson advises that he did alert preservationists in the Ipswich area, but sadly the seller wanted it gone as a matter of urgency. At this point it isn't clear what plans the current owner has for the bus.

Report: DAVE ROBINSON

Photograph: ANDREW MCLAUGHLIN



## Results of Cheffins Auction

A 1920 Albion charabanc and a half-size Leyland Titan miniature bus achieved good results in the Cheffins Vintage Sale at Sutton, Cambs on Saturday 22 April. Albion A16, BF 7455 with replica 12-seat charabanc body was knocked down for £70,000.

Originally sold to the New Zealand Government for the use of the High Commissioner, the chassis was repatriated from New Zealand in 2002 as a complete

rusty rolling chassis only and rebuilt with a new charabanc body. It was registered in UK in August 2015, and entered in the 2015 Showbus Rally by the Farrell family.

The freelance half-size Leyland TD1, UAA 550P, is based on London taxi running gear, and was built by Mr D. Farmer of Swaythling Southampton, in 1976. It sold for £4,000 hammer price.

Report: JOHN WAKEFIELD

Photographs: PETER HALL





## Rare Bova/Duple Calypso scrapped

B322 EWA was new to Gray of Hoyland Common in March 1985 and stayed with the operator until 2014 when it was sold for preservation. It was one of several vehicles stored at Lysander Yard, Shobdon that were possessed by the new land owner (as reported in *B&CP* May edition) after owners were given a very short period to remove them. B322 EWA was broken up at Sandbach Commercial Dismantlers in April, it was the last of the type built. Report: JOHN WAKEFIELD  
Picture: BUSES IN SCRAPYARDS (<https://busesinscrapyards.wordpress.com>)



## Omnibus Society Midland Branch Celebrates with Guests

The Midland Branch of the Omnibus Society celebrated its 70th Anniversary in style on Saturday 8 April at the British Motor Museum, Gaydon.

Guests included James Freeman (MD of First West of England and current OS President), Gary Nolan (Branch Ambassador and former MD Stagecoach Midlands & Wales), Brian King (Wellglade and past president), Mark Fowles (Nottingham City Transport), Pat Stringer (Commercial Director), (Stagecoach Midlands), and Toby Somers (bus-mad six-year old from Northampton, who suffers from Hirschsprung's Disease).

Members from the south of the area arrived by Stagecoach Midlands Bristol Lodekka FLF, JAH 553D, and from

the north in slightly less splendour in a TM Travel's Volvo/Plaxton coach, though this did sport cherished registration, YRC 180.

Stagecoach Midlands generously supported the day's activities by making the 51 year-old FLF freely available for the day's events.

Following a presentation on the history of the Branch and its Bulletin, suitably illustrated with pictures from 70 years of trips out, there followed free time to explore the museum and an excellent buffet lunch.

The party then embarked on the FLF to visit Stagecoach in Leamington. Unusually, this became two visits, for Stagecoach were just about to move into a brand new depot, and the party was privileged to see this before fitting out was complete. At the current depot, double-deckers dedicated to the Unibus routes to

Warwick University dominated the vehicles present on a vacation Saturday. To contrast with the FLF, the party travelled between the two sites on Enviro 400, SN66 VWX.

Geoff Lusher, Branch Chairman said: 'The Branch committee has worked very hard to commemorate a special occasion for the Branch and we were blessed with excellent weather. As well as guests from within the Society and industry, we were delighted to welcome Toby Somers. Most of us were bus-mad at his age. Whether he grows up to work in the industry or not, the OS will be there to support his interests, be they in routes, vehicles or the development of the industry as a whole.'

A collection for the CHAMPS appeal, the charity supporting children with Hirschsprung's Disease, was made on the day and raised £146.







# MELLOW YELLOW

*A Northern Olympian has been restored in PTE colours. Owner JOHN TYSON reports.*

## NORTHERN GENERAL AND THE OLYMPIAN

Northern General initially took delivery of two batches of ECW-bodied Olympian ONLXB/1Rs — the first, 3572-611 (JTY 372-407X, JTY 368X-71X) in late-1981/early-1982, the second, 3612-17 (SJR 612-7Y) in late-1982/early-1983. All were allocated to depots within Tyne & Wear.

Nos 3572-7 were mostly delivered in all-over yellow with white stripe, whilst Nos 3578-611 received NBC standard poppy red. Nos 3612-7 were delivered in full Tyne & Wear PTE livery, several of the earlier batch also receiving this livery. The only real difference between the two batches was that the JTY-X batch was semi-automatic whilst the SJR-Y batch was fully automatic.

In 1985, a further batch of Olympians, this time ONCL10/1RVs, Nos 3734-48

(B734-4 8GCN), all in full Tyne & Wear PTE livery was received. Although to standard NBC specification, the driveline was completely different. These buses were equipped with Cummins L10 engines, driving through a four-speed Voith automatic gearbox. They were followed by almost identical Nos 3649-73 (C649 -73 LJR). The C-LJR's had larger destination displays to accommodate twin-track blinds and square 'BMAC' indicator, and tail light units, rather than the original 'chunky' Leyland ones.

Northern General had, in 1983, had some previous experience of the Cummins/Voith combination, when it received a number of MCW Metrobuses so equipped. These

were evaluated at both Chester-le-Street and Murton depots, Nos 3501-5 being the more typical Gardner/Voith combination, Nos 3506-30 being the Cummins/Voith variant, but that's another story to be told!

Around the same time, a further four examples were received: Nos 3520-3 (C520-3 LJR) which also had the Cummins L10/Voith driveline, but were to DP specification with various engine enhancements, giving higher performance and coach seats. Nos 3520/1 were delivered in 'Expresslink' livery with Nos 3522/3 being in 'Tynelink' livery.

**The ECW-bodied Leyland Olympian is increasingly becoming a popular preservation project. Buses in non-standard NBC liveries are returning too in numbers. The restoration of Northern 3656 (C656 LJR) is a fine example of both.** PHILIP LAMB

**No 3656, in Go Ahead Northern livery is seen c1988 at Gateshead Metro Interchange.** JOHN TYSON COLLECTION







From left to right: **Nearside panels removed to reveal framework.**

**Offside panelling replaced and new battery tray in place.**

**Nearside panelling renewed.**  
All: JOHN TYSON

No 3522 also survives in preservation and is currently awaiting restoration.

The Cummins L10 and Voith or ZF transmission became almost the industry standard, particularly following deregulation in October 1986, but apart from NBC subsidiary, South Wales, which received seven similar vehicles in September 1985 (C901-7FCY), this was uncharted territory in the mid-1980s. Other than one unregistered development vehicle, the use of the Cummins L10 and Voith transmission in the Leyland Olympian was pioneered by Northern General.

The C-LJR batch were all fitted with front fog lamps, opening front windows, heated windscreens and twin-track destination boxes. The DP-seated variants also had flared rear wheel arches. In later life, a number of the bus seated examples were also converted to DP seating, these being Nos 3652/63/7-9/70/1. The B-GCNs were also to this specification, but with the small destination aperture and single track blinds.

### No 3656

Delivered in the autumn 1985, No 3656 was new in Tyne & Wear PTE livery with Tyne & Wear PTE fleetnames as well

as National Bus Company 'Double N' logos and Northern fleet names. It was allocated to Gateshead (Sunderland Road) depot where it remained for the first part of its operational life, the powerful Cummins L10 engine providing the lively performance needed to address the hilly terrain around Gateshead.

Following deregulation in October 1986, No 3656 received the new Go Ahead Northern red and white colours. As Go Ahead Northern evolved, No 3656 was painted in two variations of the Go Ahead Gateshead livery and ultimately in Go North East corporate livery, carrying Go Coastline fleetnames.

Around 1992/93, all Gateshead depot's Leyland Olympians moved to Winlaton depot in exchange for its allocation of MCW Metrobuses, much to the undoubted annoyance of the Gateshead drivers! However, their loss was Winlaton's gain!

Around 2000, No 3656, in Go North East red and blue livery, moved from Winlaton to Percy Main depot, and in March 2004, at almost 19 years old, No 3656 was finally retired and sold to Ensign, from where it was, along with

several of its former fleet mates, quickly sold on to Johnsons of Hodthorpe.

In 2010 No 3656 was bought by fellow preservationist, Lee Garrett and returned to the North East. The step area had been cut out, but was hastily put back together with checker plate, which, although practical, looked awful.

Ownership changed again in early 2013, as due to a change in circumstances, Lee Garrett sold 3656 to the writer and a long restoration began. It was decided that No 3656 was to look as new 'out of the box'. A large proportion of the restoration work was carried out by Gardiners of Spennymoor, renowned for the quality of its restoration work.

### RESTORATION

Apart from the lower-deck floor being rotten in places, the bodywork was generally in good condition with many original panels still in place. The floor showed signs of rot in the usual places, over the front axle/suspension and over the rear axle and the step area was now made of checker plate. The entire lower-deck floor was therefore removed and fully replaced.

Work progressed steadily and new parts and fixtures were either made or sourced. Probably the hardest parts to locate were the original style of front fog lamps. New windscreens were fitted, as were with the correct heating elements as fitted from new. During its working life, a number of hopper windows had been replaced with fixed glazing. Rather than a mis-match of hopper windows, a complete new set was ordered and fitted, as were new rubber window gaskets, helping to complete the 'as new' look.

The engine door had been exchanged for the later louvred style. A door was obtained from a scrap vehicle and used as a template to fabricate a replacement to the correct style.

Left: **No 3656 blazes a trail out of Middlesbrough bus station.**  
PHILIP LAMB





Northern General had originally specified a chrome moulding, inlaid with blue Herzim strip, reputedly to save time and money on repaints as the livery had previously been lined out with blue between the yellow and white. Much of the moulding was still on the vehicle, but had been painted over numerous times. Fortunately, new moulding was available. This was one of the more expensive items at £45 per metre — it goes round the bus three times! You do the maths!

Whilst the interior was stripped out, the opportunity was taken to replace the side coverings in the correct Formica.

No 3656 was fully re-panelled and a full set of new wheels, sprayed black and with Michelin tyres were sourced. In NBC days, black paint denoted Spigot-mounted wheels.

The battery tray was found not to be in the best condition, and a replacement was hand-made from steel and installed. New batteries were also fitted! The destination box was rebuilt back to original twin-track configuration, having been, at some point, converted to single-track. New destination blinds, fleetnames and numbers were made up to return the bus to 'as new'.

## SPRAYED

No 3656 was then re-sprayed in Tyne & Wear 'cadmium' yellow and white, the blue strip being fitted into the chrome mouldings to complete the look.

A new radiator grille was handmade from galvanised steel with new lights, mirrors, wipers and badges sourced and fitted. No 3656 still retained its original pressed metal registration plates. It has not been possible to obtain replacements in the same typeface, and although consideration was given to having the plates refurbished, the decision was taken to obtain new pressed metal plates, albeit with a similar typeface. The originals are now displayed in the garage for posterity!

Restoration has, for the time being, stopped short of re-trimming the seats. Instead the moquette, which is in generally good condition, was cleaned and vacuumed. All seats match. Although it is possible to obtain the correct NBC 'autumn gold' moquette, it is obsolete and only a run of 700m is available. Only around 55m are required to re-trim all seats, so unless another 11 or so people want to re-trim a double deck vehicle in NBC 'Autumn Gold', this part of the

restoration is on hold for now!

The exhaust brackets were in poor condition and were suspected to be the originals. Fortunately, the exhaust brackets on the later Volvo Olympian are identical, so new ones were ordered from Volvo and fitted to ensure the integrity of the exhaust system.

A number of mechanical and electrical issues were addressed; the fuel tanks were stripped and re-furbished and the fuel pump professionally re-manufactured, and a full MoT obtained, with no advisories. No 3656 was finally ready in 2015 to take to the road once again, resplendent in the livery it wore when new in 1985.

I must extend my thanks to my wife for putting up with my hobby and make special mention of my son, Luke, who always enjoys getting his hands dirty and takes pleasure in cleaning the bus. Luke has also helped paint the entire underside (and himself) silver.



Above: **Father and son team John and Luke Tyson.** PHILIP LAMB

Below: **The ECW for the Olympian is extremely tidy and business like especially at the rear.** PHILIP LAMB

Inset: **Interior retains original NBC Autumn Gold moquette.** PHILIP LAMB

Lastly, thanks to fellow preservationists and friends: Lee Garrett, Steve King, Jonathan Ruddick, Craig Smith, Terry Wightman, Adam Nicholson and David Slater for their help, sarcasm, advice and unwavering support.







DAVID JUKES presents another selection of senior buses and coaches on the open road.

#### LEMON YELLOW

Seen on Brighton's Marine Parade on 19 April is The Big Lemon's L313 AUT, a 1994 Alexander (Belfast) AM Sprint-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709D new to Midland Fox as its M313. Picture: DAVID JUKES



#### PRISTINE IN PENZANCE

Swinging into Penzance town centre near the railway and bus stations on 16 April, during the 10th Penzance VRT Revival & Vintage Bus Running Day, is former Western National No 1969 (468 FTT), a 1960 Eastern Coach Works-bodied Bristol FLF6G.

Picture: CALUM MACLENNAN

#### NIGHT BLING

J282 NNC was one of a batch of unusual Plaxton Premiere 320-bodied Scania K93CRBs new to Shearings in 1992. It is now a 16-seat party bus based in Lanarkshire and was seen on 23 March during one of its nocturnal visits to George Square in Glasgow.

Picture: DAVID LONGBOTTOM







### RAIL RIVER LINK

Replacing the Rail River Link open-top Bristol VRTs from this year are a pair of ex-London General & Plymouth Citybus Plaxton President-bodied Volvo B7TLs, Y812 TGH and Y827 TGH. Both were converted to open-top form during the close season for the company's route 100 from Totnes to Paignton and Torquay. (1) No 10 (Y812 TGH) *Frederick William Hawksworth* is seen on Torquay Strand during its 6 April test run prior to entering service. (2) The same bus is also seen on Torquay Seafront and (3) heading over the River Dart at Riverford Bridge near Staverton. Pictures: WILLIAM SPENCER





### SENIOR V

Former South Wales Transport No 447 (MCY 407), a 1955 Weymann-bodied AEC Regent V, was the tenth of this chassis type built and is the oldest known survivor. It is seen on 26 February at the Gors Avenue terminus during that day's Swansea heritage bus running day. Picture: TREVOR FOLLOWS

### CIRCULAR TOURS

The PSV Circle's AGM weekend was held in Plymouth on the 22/23 April. The latter day's itinerary included a tour using Tamar Coaches' H13 TCL, a Plaxton Excalibur-bodied Volvo B10M new to Wallace Arnold registered R431 FWT, seen here at Lee Moor near Plymouth. Ex-Plymouth Citybus No 168 (TTT 168X), a 1981 East Lancs-bodied Leyland Atlantean AN68C/IR, now part of the Plymouth City Transport Preservation Group's collection, is seen in its home city about to take the group to Plymouth Citybus' Milehouse Garage. Pictures: MALCOLM FLYNN





## OLYMPIAN HEIGHTS

(1) Passing through Chichester between schools duties on 9 February is Emsworth & District No 686 (RDL 686X), a 1982 Eastern Coach Works-bodied Leyland Olympian new to Southern Vectis bearing the same fleetnumber and later part of the London Borough of Redbridge Transport fleet before passing to its current owner in 2010. (2) Two days later Red Kite Commercial Services of Leighton Buzzard P262 VPN, a 1996 Alexander RL-bodied Volvo Olympian new to Stagecoach Ribble as its No 2238, is seen in its hometown's High Street. (3) Moving north to the Copy Nook area of Blackburn on 24 February, we find Harris Travel of Accrington HRZ 1829 on route to its afternoon school run. The 1996 Alexander (Belfast) RH-bodied Volvo Olympian was new to Dublin Bus in dual-door form as its RA301 (96 D 301) and was initially registered N731 JNO shortly before sale by dealer Ensignbus to AM PM Travel of Birmingham in 2009. The bus was subsequently operated by Thandi of Smethwick, C-MAC of Accrington and Avacab of Leyland before joining the Harris fleet in 2014 – soon afterwards receiving its current cherished registration. (4) Oakleys Coaches of Plymouth R380 LGH, a 1998 Northern Counties Palatine 2-bodied Volvo Olympian new to London General as its NV180 and more recently part of the Go Ahead Diamond and Green Transport of Hockley fleets, is seen in Exeter Street, Plymouth, on 22 April. Pictures: DAVID JUKES (1/2), CHRIS NEWTON (3) and MALCOLM FLYNN (4)







# EDEN *Revival*

*Graeme Scarlett has not only revived one of the North-East's most-loved independents, but has also celebrated its 90th birthday and restored one of the original vehicles. NICK LARKIN reports.*

Graeme Scarlett, former driver and lifelong fan of County Durham independent, The Eden, still shudders at the memory of visiting its closed-down depot after the firm's takeover.

'It was horrible. The vehicles I remembered so well were still in there, but nothing was going anywhere. I had known The Eden all my life and just couldn't believe it had happened,' he recalls.

No-one, not least Graeme himself, could have guessed that more than 20 years later, 2017 would see those very same premises once again buzzing with The Eden vehicles, including a Leyland Leopard new to the operator in 1975. Not only would Graeme be responsible for The Eden's incredible revival, but this year also sees The Eden celebrating its 90th anniversary with a book detailing its history — and what a story!

## **EDEN HISTORY: PART I**

The Eden Bus Service was set up in 1927 by George Summerson, who had been a fitter with United Automobile Services, and who saw the potential of setting up on his own, so with a £200 loan from his father, he bought a 14-seat Chevrolet bus.

The operating name came from Eden House at West Auckland, where George lived. He applied for a licence to run from





Main picture: **Now restored The Eden 1975 Plaxton Derwent-bodied Leyland Leopard PPT 446P at The Eden's original terminus at Middridge in Shildon.** NICK LARKIN

Left: **This 1948 Leyland PSI with rare Pochin body was new to Ripponden & District, but is seen here with The Eden in Spennymoor High Street. Sunderland District Roe-bodied Leyland PD2 KUP 272 is pulling out.**

Below: **Leopard line-up! Now preserved Plaxton Derwent-bodied Leyland Leopard PPT 446P is seen in its service days with 'twin' PPT 445P and two Duple Dominant II-bodied examples, OGR 893T and RGR 756V, both new in 1979.** Both: THE EDEN COLLECTION



Bishop Auckland to West Auckland, but the local council demanded the service be terminated at Evenwood due to other operators on the route.

Despite this it appeared that local services were something of a free for all. Legend has it that one operator even tempted late night cinema passengers by giving away free 'dips', a Bishop Auckland delicacy consisting of a bread roll dipped in pork fat. 'You can still buy them in the town,' Graeme reveals.

George Summerson's brother Bill joined the business a year later, taking on the administrative/financial side, and a service was introduced from West Auckland to Spennymoor via Shildon, as well as a garage and filling station being introduced along with taxis.

The bus fleet expanded with Leylands, but during World War 1 there was a reduction in stage-carriage services. The Eden did, however, win various contracts to carry war workers.

The 1950s saw room for expansion at the new Aycliffe Trading Estate, the town of Newton Aycliffe and a shopper's service to Stockton-on-Tees. Leylands and Bedfords dominated the fleet, mostly bought new.

The 1960s saw more members of the Summerson family join the business, and as further expansion of the Aycliffe services occurred, the many Leyland Leopards joining the fleet, including not only the first Plaxton Derwent-bodied bus, TUP 199E, bought in 1967, but also the last, ABR 778S, which arrived in 1977.

The firm entered the 1970s with problems of staff availability and rising levels of private car ownership, but did benefit from vehicle purchase under the New Bus Grant with assorted new vehicles, though there were some judicious secondhand purchases.

By this point, most members of the fleet were Leylands, though TPT 436K, a Willowbrook-bodied Bedford YRQ, which joined the fleet in 1972, was never popular with drivers due to its inferior brakes.

The deregulation of the coach market in the early 1980s saw The Eden expand with executive coaches not least Duple Dominant III-bodied Volvo B58, LTN 753X, marketed as the 'Video Executive', the on-board audio-visual entertainment remaining switched off though when the coach found itself on local service work!

Private hires did well, except on one occasion, when a vehicle used on nightclub work disappeared for several days after one of the revellers decided to drive it home himself!

Sadly the final conductors and conductresses, known as 'ducs or sometimes 'ducks' locally, were made redundant around this time. Minor changes were made to the service routes, and to help with an Eden Holidays coach tour venture, a former demonstrator Mercedes-Benz O.303 was purchased and registered 369 EBC. A contract was won for a service for Barnard Castle School, taking scholars in Darlington.





**New in 1972, Willowbrook-bodied Bedford YRQ, TPT 436K was never popular with drivers due to its inferior brakes.** THE EDEN COLLECTION

all its depots, but following sale to the Cowie Group (later Arriva), the company finally disappeared by 1999 — another victim of corporate identity.

## EDEN RETURN!

Born in Shildon, Graeme Scarlett regularly travelled to school on The Eden buses. 'I got to know all the drivers and took a real interest in the operator to the point that when people asked me what I wanted to do, I would tell them that I wanted to be a driver on The Eden.' This he would eventually succeed in doing, as a part-timer during 1978 and 1979.

'When I left school I did several jobs including working as a sales representative for a local soft drinks company, but also passed my PSV test at Drivewell of Darlington.'

He heard that the Eden was looking for drivers and went for a successful assessment. 'I was officially a part-timer but I loved the job so much that I ended up doing more hours than many full-timers,' Graham recalls. The conductors and conductresses ruled the bus with a rod of iron. If anyone was acting out line they only had to say one word: off!

## PART 2: DEREGULATION, UNITED AND DECLINE

United had announced that it intended to run on the Bishop Auckland–Aycliffe service post-deregulation, which prompted The Eden to team up with municipally-owned Darlington Transport to operate an intensive network of services radiating from the town under the 'DART' name. Some county council contracts were also won.

In 1988 a trio of MCW Metrideres, F201-3 RVN was purchased. These were the last new vehicles to be acquired under the Summerson family control, though the fleet would soon comprise everything from a Freight Rover Sherpa through to a pair of Bristol LHs. In the early 1990s, five secondhand Leyland Nationals, bought

from various sources, were refurbished and fitted with Volvo engines.

Contracts were doing fairly well, but the decline of Darlington Transport and industrial closures lead to some decline in services. An ageing fleet, allied with little interest from further members of the Summerson family wishing to take on the business meant an offer from North East Bus, then owners of United, was accepted.

Ironically, negotiations with United had taken place in the 1950s and in the 1980s, the Summersons had looked at joining forces with a local estate agent to buy United! The last independent The Eden bus ran into the depot on 31 December 1995.

North East Bus had intended to roll out The Eden name as a low-cost unit across



The Leopard in Shildon, a town famous for its railway history.





Above left: **Floor has been renewed but interior is otherwise original.**

Above: **The Leopard is authentic down to original phone number.**

Left: **PPT 446P back outside its original depot.**

Below: **Cab not over endowed with instruments.**

All: NICK LARKIN



A new job in area sales for Coca-Cola meant less bus driving time, so Graham took a job at Humbles Coaches in his native Shildon. 'It meant less travel but my heart was always with The Eden,' he says. Meanwhile though Graham became a professional organist, playing at venues including the Blackpool Tower ballroom.

We've already heard about Graeme's horror at the demise of The Eden, but Graeme admits to having a truly bizarre dream. 'I dreamt that I was back at the depot, but it was full of buses I had never seen, and engineer Chris Dyke said they hadn't seen service yet.' Not surprising that Graeme wonders if this dream was some sort of premonition . . .

Back to harsh reality. In 1999 he saw the potential for a town service in Shildon and purchased an Iveco minibus. This was run under the Graham's Handy Bus name, but Arriva reacted strongly against the newcomer and the service was withdrawn.

Graeme picked up some school contracts and an Asda free bus service,

still being operated some 15 years later. A Tesco service followed.

Meanwhile negotiations with Arriva to allow Graeme to acquire the intellectual property rights to The Eden name were taking place. These proved successful at the third attempt. Thus for a short time The Eden was back on its 99 service from West Auckland to Shildon, but this sadly proved unviable. Instead the former OK Cockfield-Woodland service was secured in 2008, a new Optare Solo, MX57 URA being bought to operate it. This service is now run by Scarlet Band, but in 2014 The Eden won the contract for the Newton Aycliffe town service. Also operated is the 891 (Butterknowle-Barnard Castle).

Today six Optare Solos, an ex-Chapman of New Stevenston 2006 Plaxton Primo, plus an ex-McGowan of Neiston Plaxton-bodied 2001 minibus SF51 PVV are operated on contracts and private hire. There are eight staff including Graeme, a couple of whom previously worked for the family-owned firm.

## A DEPOT, A LEOPARD AND THE FUTURE

By a stroke of luck, Graeme was able to obtain the lease on the original West Auckland depot. Some work was required but the depot re-opened in 2012 and is now home to the operation fleet, and various preserved vehicles, one of which is particularly important to Graeme.

'A lovely touch was that Stephen Foster, who locked up the depot after the last bus came in in 1995 kindly agreed to open up for the first bus out from the re-opened depot in 2012,' Graeme recalls. Stephen was also the saviour of a vehicle that meant the familiar sound of a Leyland Leopard echoed from the building when B&CP arrived. Out came Plaxton Derwent-bodied PPT 446P, looking all set for a service run to Shildon.

New to The Eden in 1976, this 55-seater had been sold to Bygone Buses of Kent during the 1990s. Stephen bought both the bus together with the engineless and accident-damaged remains of sister





vehicle PPT 445P, which came from a Lincolnshire scrapyard.

The buses had spent 12 years in the open on a farm, but PPT 446P sprang into action within five minutes of former The Eden mechanic Chris Dyke heading underneath. 'Both buses were in a shocking state, but at least the chassis on this one was in good order,' recalls Graeme.

A seven-year in-house restoration followed, much of it completed by vehicle fitter Kenny Nesbitt, who sadly didn't live to see the work completed. The bus is a tribute to him.

A reframe was carried out from the waistrail down and a new floor laid. Major overhauls of the brakes and electrics took place and the engine was thoroughly serviced. A repaint was carried out by Garnetts Coaches and an original The Eden blind and transfers were added.

Floor apart, the interior of the bus is very much original, and

a great place to be during a spirited run to Shildon for photos at the original The Eden terminus at Middridge. The Leyland O.680 engine and five-speed pneumocyclic gearbox performed perfectly.

Leopards with this type of Plaxton body were a staple diet for Co Durham independents over 20 years including much-missed names such as TMS (Trimdon Motor Services) Gillett Brothers and OK Motor Services. Now we can't readily think of another survivor, but that didn't stop several members of the public from putting their hand out to hail the bus!

'When the Leopard was finished there was a nice feeling that we had achieved what we set out to achieve,' says

Graeme, who is hoping to get the vehicle Class 6-tested, following which it may well take a short turn in service to mark the 90th anniversary.

Graeme doesn't rule out further

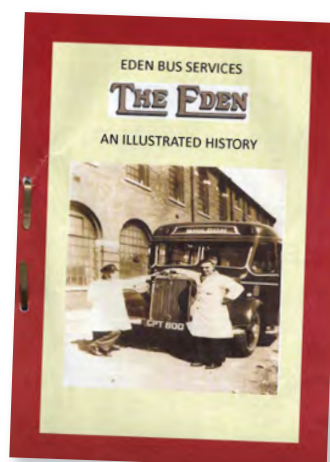
expansion in the future for The Eden, officially Graham's Motor Services Ltd, t/a The Eden, 'but there are no immediate major plans,' he says. AEC Routemaster RML2443 has though been acquired from a local enthusiast and will be used for weddings etc.

Adds Graham: 'The Eden is part of the historical fabric of this area. It has always had a loyal following, indeed when we revived the

company we said we had come back, but we had never really left people's hearts.

Concludes Graeme: 'We are delighted to be able to preserve not only The Eden but also its depot and an important vehicle. We have to thank so many people who have enabled this to happen.'

The 90th anniversary is being celebrated with an illustrated talk and slide by Charles Marshall and John Godfrey at The Memorial Hall, West Auckland on 9 September. For further details of the event, book, to hire a vehicle or store one at The Eden's depot log on to [www.comparetheeden.com](http://www.comparetheeden.com).



Top: **Leopard meets former Blackpool Transport Optare Solo from the current Eden fleet.** NICK LARKIN

Left: **Eden saviour Graeme Scarlett.** NICK LARKIN



# NOTTINGHAM HERITAGE VEHICLES CHARITY INVITES YOU TO THE 2017 EAST MIDLANDS BUS & COMMERCIAL GATHERING



**SUNDAY 4TH JUNE 2017**  
**WOLLATON PARK, NOTTINGHAM**  
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VINTAGE BUSES LINKING THE DISPLAY AREA TO WOLLATON HALL

In addition to the buses there are 500 plus cars & commercials attending along with a large selection of stalls.

Vintage, Prewar & Classic Cars are complimented by Stationary Engines, Automotive Club Stands,  
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The event is set in 500 acres of glorious parkland along with the Natural History Museum,  
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To enter a Bus, Coach or Lorry please contact Simon on 07971 105491 or email  
[enquiries@nottinghamheritagevehicles.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@nottinghamheritagevehicles.co.uk)



# Coaching by Bluebird



Scottish Bus Group subsidiary Midland Scottish, once part of W. Alexander & Sons, had continued to use Alexander's bluebird coaching logo, rebranding itself Midland Bluebird following deregulation. Also around that time Northern Scottish began trading as Bluebird Northern, resurrected the bluebird logo. There followed as a result two fleets with 'Bluebird' branding. Midland Bluebird became part of Grampian Regional Transport (later First) in 1990. Bluebird Northern on the other hand joined the Stagecoach Group in 1991.



Top: The Alexander fleets took delivery of a total of 84 Alexander-bodied Leyland Royal Tiger coaches to this design in 1952/53. Seen here in June 1972, still looking good despite its advancing years, is Alexander Midland MPC65 (EMS 520).

Above and left: MPD213/6 (RMS 702/5) were members of a batch of 20 Alexander-bodied Leyland Tiger Cubs delivered to SBG subsidiaries in 1961, all but one of which fitted as 38-seaters, primarily for touring work. MPD213, with emergency exit open, is seen on what must have been a hot day in August 1972, whilst MPD213 is caught on private hire duties, date unknown.



The 1970s saw the arrival in Scotland of numbers of Plaxton- and Duple-bodied coaches such as Midland Bluebird MPE445 (SSU 874), a Duple Dominant I-bodied Leyland Leopard seen here in October 1989. This coach had been new in 1978 to Alexander (Fife) as its FPE117 (CFS 117S).



Seddon Pennine 7s became something of Scottish speciality in the 1970s with 516 examples delivered, all but 11 of the production run. Seen in June 1992, Plaxton Supreme IV-bodied NSX 957T, No 539 in the Bluebird fleet had been Scottish Omnibuses as its YS957 in 1979. This Seddon arrived at Midland via Central Scottish in 1989, passing on to Lowland 1995. It was scrapped the following year.



New to Scottish Omnibuses as its XH545 (BSG 545W) in 1981, this Leyland Tiger with rebuilt Duple Dominant III coachwork arrived with Northern Bluebird as its NCT5 (CSU 922) via Central Scottish, and was to pass to Stagecoach with the acquisition of Northern in 1991, the year of this view.







Above: It's June 1992. These two Plaxton Paramount 3200-bodied Leyland Tigers arrived in the Midland Bluebird fleet by different routes. On the left is Scottish Citylink-liveried 135 (OVT 798), new to Western SMT as its L184 (A184 UGB), whilst to the right in GRT-style livery is Bluebird 138 (GSU 339), new to Potteries as its No 73 (ERF 73Y), passing to Grampian in 1988 and transferred to Midland Bluebird in 1991.

Right: Midland Bluebird 131 (SSU 831), a Duple Laser 2-bodied Leyland Tiger, is seen here in June 1992.



Below: New to National Welsh in 1984 as its UC1220 (A220 VWO) later acquiring the registration AAX 500A. Following service with Cynon Valley, this Duple Laser-bodied Leyland Tiger was transferred within Stagecoach to Northern Bluebird with which it took fleet No 460.





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# » The Smallest Standard

*The Stagecoach Group's smallest standard bus of the early-1990s was the Alexander AM Sprint-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709D. Former Stagecoach Hants & Surrey No 879 (K879 ODY) is now preserved by Mark Turner as DAVID JUKES reports.*

The minibus proved itself a most useful deregulation tool in the mid-1980s, as it was better able to penetrate residential areas than full-sized buses and it enabled operators to increase route frequencies on a more cost-effective basis. Some 30 years on from the deregulation of stage carriage services, the minibus remains a useful part of the bus industry and is the vehicle of choice for many routes.

## DIVERSE COLLECTION

The Stagecoach Group inherited a diverse collection of minibuses on acquiring National Bus Company and Scottish Bus Group subsidiaries either directly from those concerns or from subsequent private sector owners. Many were considered ripe for replacement, particularly the

pioneering panel van conversions and other less durable types.

The chosen minibus standard combined a Mercedes-Benz 709D chassis and cowl with Alexander AM-type bodywork. Orders were placed in May 1992 for 150 units, April 1994 for a further 200, and a final 400 in October 1995.

The 709D chassis formed part of the Mercedes-Benz T2 range which was launched in 1986 to replace the preceding T1. The latter included the L608D van which, when converted to a 20-seat bus, proved a popular choice for operators seeking a more robust minibus. The T2 itself evolved into the 0.810D and 0.814D Vario in 1996/97.

Alexander's AM bodywork was introduced in 1985 on the Renault S56

chassis and cowl — the A prefix signifying the type's aluminium alloy framework. It was available from 1988 on Mercedes-Benz T2 chassis; the bodywork simultaneously altered to include higher set windows, a taller windscreen and an enlarged destination box.

The adoption of model names by Alexander saw the minibus-based AM become the AM Sprint from 1993 until its replacement by the ALX100 four years later. It should be noted the AM designation also included the midibus Dash bodywork built on Dennis Dart and Volvo B6 chassis from 1991. Demand for the AM Sprint saw examples built in the Alexander (Belfast) factory in Mallusk (County Antrim) in addition to Alexander's main Falkirk plant.



Opposite: **Stagecoach Hants & Surrey No 879 (K879 ODY)**, an Alexander AM Sprint-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709D features an offside driver's cab door and rear emergency exit. DAVID JUKES

Right: **Mark and daughter Rebecca pose with 879 on the day of its purchase for preservation in February 2009.**

Below: **No 879 in Norfolk Green livery, albeit with fleetnames and numbers removed, at the Alton Bus Rally on 18 July 2010.** Both: MARK TURNER

## STAGECOACH HANTS & SURREY

A number of the Stagecoach Group's May 1992 order for the Alexander-bodied 709D were allocated to Stagecoach Hants & Surrey for operation from its Aldershot and Hindhead garages. These replaced older and less reliable ex-Alder Valley stock acquired with both garages' operations from Q-Drive in October 1992 (Alder Valley's Alton operations were also purchased at that time by Stagecoach but instead transferred to Hampshire Bus while those at Guildford and Woking were an earlier sale to the Drawlane Group in November 1990) and ensured Stagecoach's corporate livery was swiftly introduced to the area.

Former Stagecoach Hants & Surrey 879 (K879 ODY) was first registered on 10 April 1993 and delivered to Aldershot, remaining on that garage's books until sale to Norfolk Green on 14 August 2002. There it remained in service until sale to present owner Mark Turner for preservation on 21 February 2009.



'I was working casually for Norfolk Green which is how I got to know the bus,' he explains. 'Norfolk Green had twice tried to sell it on eBay but both sales fell through. I paid for it in hard cash and hard labour but got a very good deal!'

'I have a penchant for smaller vehicles and had driven D103 DAJ, Norfolk Green's last L608D, many times along the north Norfolk coast before it passed to the East Anglia Transport Museum for preservation,' Mark continues. 'When the 709D became available I could not resist.'

## PRESERVATION

Mark's father was then resident in Norfolk which led to the Mercedes being parked on his drive for six months before it was put through an MoT test by Norfolk Green then moved to the south coast. No 879 was rallied that summer, appearing

at Alton, Gosport and Farnham in unbranded Norfolk Green livery.

Preparation for an external repaint followed; the minibus went into Stagecoach South's Winchester paintshop during the 2012 London Olympic Games. Nothing else was being repainted then – every Stagecoach South bus was either at the Olympics or in service, thereby providing Mark with an ideal opportunity to have 879 outshopped in its original Stagecoach Group corporate striped livery.

A replacement bonnet and grille were also sourced from a scrapped ex-Stagecoach sister vehicle to replace damaged originals and vinyl logos were acquired from Signs Express of Farlington, Portsmouth. The finished bus was soon on the rally circuit once again but its stay proved relatively brief.

'It was being taken for MoT testing when the driver accidentally depressed the accelerator pedal through the cab floor,' explains Mark. 'The cab floor is a known weak spot but having it holed meant the bus had to be laid up pending repair.'

'Significant welded repairs to the cab floor and offside wheelarch were carried out by a local fitter and the bus successfully returned to the road last year,' he adds. 'However, I was advised the nearside wheelarch requires similar attention before the next MoT test is carried out.'

'I am also about to change the rear bumper from the fabricated section currently fitted to a glass-reinforced plastic original.'





Right: **No 879 at Stagecoach South's Winchester garage awaiting repaint in Stagecoach stripes on 5 August 2012. A replacement bonnet and grille have been sourced from a withdrawn sister that carried the current Stagecoach swooped livery.**

Below right: **No 879 inside Stagecoach South's Winchester paintshop soon after application of its white topcoat in August 2012.**

Far right, top: **Significant welded repairs were carried out on 879's cab floor in 2015; the work is seen here in progress.**

Far right, centre: **Further welding was required to repair the upper part of this front wheelarch.**

Far right: **The new cab floor metalwork has been freshly primed pending application of topcoats and floor vinyl.**

All: MARK TURNER



Opposite page, top: **The AM Sprint bodywork's rear-end styling contained elements borrowed from some of Alexander's contemporary full-sized bus and coach bodywork, particularly the mouldings around the high-set rear window.**

Centre left: **No 879 preceded the adoption of Stagecoach Group-standard chevron on grey upholstery and instead carried this attractive brown-based scheme. Moquette is also applied to side and ceiling panels.**

Centre right: **No 879's cab remains substantially in as-withdrawn condition.**

Right: **The free heritage bus services operated in conjunction with the Portsmouth-based Vintage Transport Group's Indoor Transport Fair of 13 November 2016 were operated by three Stagecoach Group-standard buses of the late-1980s and early-1990s. Lined up on Portsdown Hill at the onetime ASWE works bus service terminus are the Stagecoach Heritage Fleet's 14951 (F601 MSL), a 1988 Alexander RL-bodied Leyland Olympian, and 32501 (J501 GCD), a 1992 Alexander Dash-bodied Dennis Dart, plus 879. All: DAVID JUKES**





## INTERIOR

Also on Mark's list for attention is the interior. The original 1993 moquette remains in place but needs replacing; the bus being one of the last deliveries before the adoption of Group-standard grey and chevron interior finishes. Unfortunately Mark has been unable to source a supply of identical material —readers able to assist his quest are asked to e-mail: [mark@southernbusevents.co.uk](mailto:mark@southernbusevents.co.uk).

Much easier work to accomplish will be the repainting of interior handrails using orange powder-based paint.

'I have been very lucky,' concludes Mark. 'The bus was exceptionally well maintained by Stagecoach and Norfolk Green. It was silvered underneath at every Norfolk Green MoT test and was in good order when bought.'

'It was effectively acquired straight from service and I have not needed to do much in the way of restoration.'

Thanks to Mark Turner and Jason Rayner for their assistance; K879 ODY is expected to make its first appearance at the 2017 Southsea Spectacular and also attend the Alton, Gosport and Worthing events.



## SOUTHERN BUS EVENTS

Southern Bus Events was initially set up by Mark with Julian Bowden and Jason Rayner to organise the Southdown 100 event on Southsea Common in 2015. Stagecoach South wished to celebrate Southdown's centenary but quickly realised its main business had to take priority

— the then Stagecoach South Managing Director Andrew Dyer agreeing that the intrepid trio could instead take the lead with company support.

The event was intended to be a one-off but such was its success and the encouragement received, Julian and Mark decided

to continue Southern Bus Events (Jason choosing to organise his own events under the Hampshire Bus & Coach Preservation Group banner). Its regular events are the Southsea Spectacular (this year's is on 11 June), for which Portsmouth City Council is most supportive, and the annual Shoreham Transport

Fair (24 February 2018 is the next one — put it in your diary now).

Development of further events is unlikely as Mark admits the hardest part is finding a venue and date for anything new.

Further details may be found on the Southern Bus Events website: [www.southernbusevents.co.uk](http://www.southernbusevents.co.uk)





# Rear-engined saloons



Above: **This Marshall-bodied Leyland Panther was new to Bradford in 1969 as its 508 (NAK 508H). It was later acquired by Chesterfield initially for service, being, at a later date, converted into a publicity bus. It is seen here in 1981.**

Right: **Preston was another municipal that embraced the Leyland Panther, its No 206 (HCK 206G) being a 1968 Marshall-bodied example. It was caught on camera in 1986, having passed to the Leyland Legionaires Morris Dancers.**



Below: **Eastbourne favoured East Lancs to body its 10 1970 Leyland Panthers, one of which, No 9 (HHC 909J), was converted into an information bus in 1981. It is seen here in Eastbourne in 1984.**



*The late 1960s saw the rise of the rear-engined single-decker. Apart from the market-leading Bristol RE, other manufacturers' offerings enjoyed varying success, the Leyland Panther and the AEC Swift, which shared the same chassis frame, being the only other viable contenders. Both, however, were still way behind the Bristol RE. By way of a celebration of the genre, we bring you this month examples of all three to enter the strange and varied world of the non-PSV.*





Above: Largest customer by far for the AEC Swift was London Transport, early examples being given the class name 'Merlin' by LT. New in 1969 for Red Arrow work, MCW-bodied 'Merlin' MBS458 (VLW 458G) was later used by LT to trial Voith transmission before passing to Don Allmey's Allco Passenger Services, with which it was used as a mobile rally shop, in which role it was caught on camera in Nottingham in 1984.



Above: A well-known non-PSV, former London Transport 1971 Park Royal-bodied AEC Swift SMS441 (EGN 441J), was converted into a recruitment bus before taking up its final resting place, without engine, as 'Tino's Coach Café' occupying a lay-by on the Chichester Bypass. It is seen here in 1991.

Right: Former Ribble 249 (HRN 249G), a 1969 Bristol RELL6G, is seen here in Preston in 1987 working for Age Concern. This bus is currently under restoration at the Merseyside Transport Trust's Burscough premises.







Above: **What a great livery!**  
Former BOC C1139 (UHY 634H),  
a 1969 Bristol RELL6L is seen  
here in 1984 in use by subsequent  
owner City of Oxford Motor  
Services as a National Express  
publicity bus. Withdrawn in 1986,  
the RE was scrapped in 1990.

Right: **Bristol RELL6L LAE  
770E** was built as a Bristol  
demonstrator/development  
vehicle in 1967, and although  
having spent short periods  
in time on demonstration to  
several operators, never entered  
regular service with an owner. It  
was to spend several years with  
the Road Transport Industry  
Training Board, in which  
role it is seen here in  
September 1977.



Below: **Several municipals took examples of the RE with East Lancs bodies as well  
as the standard ECW bodywork. An example of the former, Accrington, later  
Hyndburn, 31 (OTF 358K), a 1972 Bristol RESL6L, is seen here in its later day role as  
the undertaking's Transport Information Centre.**





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# Scarborough in the sun



The second Scarborough Busfest rally and running day enjoyed its fair share of sunshine. PHILIP LAMB was there to record the event.

Left: **Marshall-bodied Bristol LHS6L NDL 769G** was new in 1969 to Southern Vectis as its 833. Transferred to United, its small size led to it pioneering housing estate services when allocated to the Newton Aycliffe town service receiving this special livery.



Above: A pair of East Riding survivors. East Yorkshire Leyland National 2 188 (LAG 188V) was new in 1980. Sold to East Midland, it later passed to Chester City Transport, from which it was withdrawn for preservation in 2003. 1969 Roe-bodied Leyland Atlantean Hull 255 (PRH 255G) is another regular sight on the rally scene.

Right: An unusual open-top conversion, Grimsby-Cleethorpes AEC Bridgemaster 133 (NJV 995) was rebuilt as an open-top bus after an accident in 1974. The bus entered service on Cleethorpes seafront for the 1975 season, and received the special livery seen here in 1977 to mark The Queen's Silver Jubilee.





Yorkshire Coastliner 3633 (BT66 MVR), a Wright Streetdeck-bodied Volvo B5TL leaves the site with a good load aboard. Watch out for the geography though as according to the route-branding, York is south of Leeds!



Former London MCW Metrobus B58 WUL is a recently redundant member of the local Shoreline Suncruisers fleet, as it's low-floor buses only now on regular service. Open-top buses proved popular on the day of the event, although some were caught out by a brief but quite heavy shower in the early afternoon!



This year sees 110 years of local coachbuilder Plaxton, a small number of its coaches turning out to mark the event. Watched over by Keith Kitching's Scotts Greys Plaxton Consort-bodied Austin K8 RHN 548 are two coaches from the Thornes fleet. New in 1996 as N200 VHO, Plaxton Premiere-bodied Volvo B10M SAC 500 is the latest recruit to the Thornes heritage fleet, although the coach still performs everyday duties. Resting alongside is Plaxton Elite III-bodied AEC Reliance TEC 599N, new to Jackson of Kirkby Stephen in 1974.







# Magnificent MIDDLESBROUGH



*The Teesside 500 Groups annual running day brought forth a grand selection of vehicles. PHILIP LAMB reports.*

Above: **UFJ 292**, a Massey-bodied Guy Arab IV has been in preservation for many years in the livery of latter day operator Shaw Bros of Byers Green. It was new to Exeter as its No 52. Pictures; PHILIP LAMB

Left: **Darlington 7 (AHN 451B)** is a Roe-bodied Daimler CCG5. This 1965-built bus remained in service until 1981, when it was sold directly into preservation with the Aycliffe & District Preservation Society, with which it remains to this day.



Right: **Wright-bodied Volvo B10BLE X618 VWR** was new to Reliance, Sutton-on-the-Forest in 2001. New this year to the preservation scene, it is owned by Josh Bickerstaffe and Matthew Thompson.



Below: **New to Alder Valley in 1975 as its 930 (HPK 507N)**, this Bristol VRT/SL2 is currently on the road with Stagecarriage, a Teesside-based operator. Converted to open-top by Alder Valley. This bus spent 15 years in service with Shoreline Suncruisers of Scarborough.



New in 1988 to West Riding as its 50 (E50 TYG), this Leyland Royal Tiger Doyen was initially preserved in Midland Red Coaches livery, but has now been restored to the Ridings Travel livery carried when new.



In preservation for many, many years, United (Durham District Services) BLO202 (HHN 202) is a Bristol L5G, new in 1947. The body, however, dates from the previous year and was fitted in 1957.



# NATIONAL EXPRESS



## *A former United Tiger now provides luxury travel to rallies for its preservationist owner.*

A Plaxton Paramount III-bodied Leyland Tiger, this coach, despite its likely appearance, was never permanently allocated by its original owner United to National Express duties, but it certainly looks the part thanks to its owner in preservation Paul Clinton, who lives in Netherton in the West Midlands, but keeps the coach at the North West Vehicle Restoration Trust's Kirkby premises.

Originally registered E269 KEF and numbered 1309, the Tiger's duties included longer stage-carriage work across United's operating area as well as private hires and occasional forays on National Express, but not in National Express livery. Instead the coach wore United plain but attractive red and white coach livery.

The Tiger's next owner was Gardiner of Spennymoor, the coach continuing to serve in the North East when it passed for a short period to Northumberland County Council.

Next stop, in 2005, was Second City Travel in Birmingham, where it remained until purchased by Paul in 2014, by

which time the Tiger had acquired the registration DAZ 3294.

Paul set about the coach with a view to making it a suitable vehicle for attending rallies some distance from the Tiger's Liverpool base, installing a small servery and sleeping accommodation at the rear of the coach re-arranging other seats and installing tables. Some panels were replaced and the coach despatched to Central Bus Restorations, where Mark Owen carried out a full brake relining in addition to replacing the airbags.

National Express livery seemed quite appropriate to its new role, so Paul rubbed the coach down himself before an overall



# STYLE

Bus & Coach  
PRESERVATION



coat of white was applied by Helms Coaches. Vinyls were supplied and expertly fitted by Lee Hobson Decal Central.

The former United Tiger now visits rallies over a large area, looking just the ticket in its new role!







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# THE PROVEN ONE

*After seven years' restoration Ribble Leyland Atlantean 1397 returned to the road in 2015 with the Ribble Vehicle Preservation Trust. SIMON GILL and owner GERARD BUTLER bring us the story.*

The original Leyland Atlantean PDR1/1 was prone to several weaknesses. These included problems with the braking system in cold weather, the engine cooling and heating systems being temperamental and some chassis frames even cracking under the weight of the engine. The launch of the AN68 in 1972 was a new start and the model quickly gained a good reputation for robustness and reliability which befitted Leyland publicity at the time which dubbed it 'the proven one'. Former Ribble Atlantean/Park Royal 1397 (NRN 397P) is a splendid example of the type but, as we shall see, its restoration was not without its fair share of ups and downs along the way.

## RIBBLE ATLANTEANS

Ribble was a loyal Leyland customer and between 1959 and 1962 built up a fleet of 149 PDR1/1 Atlanteans consisting of 70 highbridge and 44 lowbridge models plus 15 'Gay Hostess' and 20 'White Lady' coaches. In addition, subsidiaries Standerwick and Scout

took 22 'Gay Hostess' coaches and five highbridge service buses respectively. A return to the PD3 Titan followed before two batches of PDR1/2 low height Atlanteans arrived: 10 in 1966 with Alexander bodies followed by 15 with Northern Counties bodies in 1967.

Once it had become part of the National Bus Company in 1969 Ribble saw the arrival of 23 Bristol VRT/SL6LX in 1971/72. Although the VRT was the standard NBC double-decker the early-to mid-1970s saw Ribble, Southdown and London Country in particular order large numbers of the much improved Atlantean AN68/1R with attractively styled Park Royal bodies. Ribble acquired a total of 104 in three batches, the first being delivered in 1973/74, the second in 1974/75 and the third in 1976. The first two batches were virtually identical, unusual features being grey window rubber and moquette covered seats in a new pattern on both decks. The final batch reverted to the more usual black window rubber and had 'pressed' tan vinyl seats (similar to earlier Leyland Nationals)

in both the lower and upper saloons.

The Park Royals were a familiar sight in many parts of the Ribble empire. Although primarily a 73-seat service bus, they could be found on express services such as the X60 between Manchester and Blackpool and X61 between Liverpool and the resort. They were also regular performers on the famous 555 between Lancaster and Keswick.

A further 82 AN68/1R Atlanteans, this time with ECW full-height bodies, followed in three batches between 1976 and 1981. These were interspersed with 60 more Bristol VRT/SL3s, between 1977 and 1980.

## No 1397

1397 (NRN 397P) was new in March 1976. Many of the Park Royals were concentrated on Merseyside and 1397 was no exception, spending the first ten years of its life at Bootle. Further Park Royals were transferred to Liverpool area depots prior to the hiving off of the Merseyside operation to the 'new' North Western Road Car in 1986. By a quirk of fate, just before Ribble divested itself of its





Merseyside operation to the newly formed North Western, 1397 escaped to Kendal and then to Skerton (Lancaster).

One of the last of the Park Royals to operate with Ribble, 1397 was withdrawn in 1990 and passed to Hyndburn (Accrington) as its 207; looking very attractive in that operator's red and dark blue livery. Remaining for only two years, it passed to former NBC company East Yorkshire as its 905. Returning to the North West, it operated in Manchester for East Yorkshire subsidiary Finglands as its 1735.

In 1997, the bus passed to its final owner on the British mainland, well-known operator Edwards of Llantwit Fardre in South Wales, where it was used on school contracts. From Edwards it passed to a Northern Ireland enthusiast for preservation. For whatever reason this plan did not progress and the bus finally came to rest with Lloyd Cooke Motors of Lismacarl, County Londonderry, a large car body shop and accident repair centre which used 1397 as a mobile off-road advertising hoarding around Christmas time each year.

## INTO PRESERVATION

Surprisingly, given Ribble's Park Royal Atlanteans operated until relatively recently, there were no preserved examples, and by the early 2000s none appeared to still be extant with later operators. There were unverified reports of one with a bible group in Scotland and another with a dance troupe in Oldham, but attempts to gain further information proved fruitless. In the mid-1990s Gerard got news of a sighting of two with an operator just outside Dublin, one converted to open-top, the other complete, but by the early 2000s these seemed to have disappeared. RVPT therefore assumed there were no survivors.

However, thanks to East Midlands enthusiast Steve Carter, it was established 1397 survived as a mobile hoarding in Northern Ireland. Gerard duly travelled to the province for a day, met proprietor Lloyd Cooke and inspected 1397. To say it looked down at heel is an understatement. Most of its seats were missing, its colour was a faded and dirty white and the radiator grille was home to an abandoned bird's nest. Little piles of rust on the ground at certain points indicated all was not well with the body frame. Nevertheless 1397 started at first press of the button and the engine sounded fine. Not surprisingly Mr

Opposite: **Offside front of Ribble 1397, a Park Royal-bodied Leyland Atlantean at Wrea Green, a favourite location for official Ribble photographs.**  
SIMON GILL

Right: **No 1397 in Accrington whilst working as Hyndburn 207.**  
COURTESY RAY BIGNELL



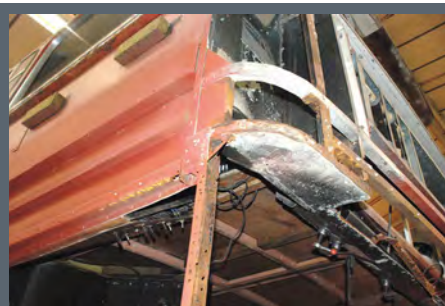
Cooke was willing to exchange 1397 for a replacement vehicle, and an 'in principle' deal was struck. Thanks to the kindness of Peter Walton of Walton's Coach Hire, a recently retired former Tyne & Wear Atlantean was made available to exchange for 1397. Everything was now in place to return 1397 to the north west of England.

Gerard, with help from fellow RVPT member and good friend Mark Prescott, duly sailed from Fleetwood to Larne with the Tyne & Wear Atlantean. The outward journey was without incident and from Larne to Derry the upper deck of the Atlantean afforded some spectacular views of the Sperrin Mountain range. The return with 1397 was less comfortable as it had few seats and was very dirty after years of outside storage. However the journey to Larne was equally uneventful apart from one minor starting issue and the pair was

even able to catch an earlier return ferry. Customs officers and ferry staff looked a bit askance at such a battered vehicle using their boat and Mark had a couple of anxious moments when the fuel pump started playing up causing the engine to cut out during difficult parking manoeuvres. However, the sailing was uneventful and in the early hours of the morning 1397 was safely under cover on home territory.

## INVESTIGATION BEGINS

No 1397's generally poor condition dictated a full strip down to determine the extent of bodywork restoration required. As suspected, when outer panels were removed, the full horror of its condition was revealed. Side pillars were badly corroded and in some cases completely broken. Stress panels were so badly eaten away with rust they would have to be



**Front offside corner of the windscreen in March 2011 showing the extensive corrosion found throughout 1397.**



**The stripped lower saloon in March 2011 showing the supports inserted to keep the body rigid and hold the ceiling level.**



**No 1397's engine bulkhead replaced in March 2011.**



**New framework in place in May 2012.**  
All: JONATHAN CADWALLADER



replaced. Worse still the bulkhead that separates the body from the engine was corroded and distorted through years of body movement and repair would be a major challenge. Additionally, the lower-deck floor was 'soft' in a number of places and would need new marine ply. Of the few remaining lower-deck seats, their legs were rusted and beyond hope and the cushions and backs (not original) were unusable.

Once the lower-deck floor was removed further problems were identified. Although the main chassis condition was reasonable, body and platform bearers were in poor condition and would need replacing. Many window pans were badly etched with graffiti and some were broken due to body movement. Most of the hopper windows were missing and the front between decks fibreglass panel had been replaced with one without destination glass.

At this point Gerard was close to abandoning the project as he was beginning to feel 1397's restoration was not feasible. However, two things persuaded him to continue. The first was the willingness of good friends with the right skills to work on the restoration. These included Mark Prescott, Derek Fullerton, Dave Holden, Mark Penney, Steve Dawson, Geoff Meek, Graham Ashcroft and other RVPT colleagues who were all involved at certain times during the course of the restoration. The other was the availability of a similar former London Country Atlantean, AN153 (VPA 153S), that would act as a pattern and source of missing parts for 1397. As it turned out, without this donor vehicle, 1397's restoration would not have been possible.

## RESTORATION BEGINS

Thanks to the willingness of individuals with appropriate skills to get involved, work on mechanical, electrical and body areas could continue to some extent in tandem. However, it has to be remembered people's availability is not constant and 1397, like any other project, was not being worked on all the time.

This began with the removal of external panelling, the position of each being marked on the removed panel. These would act as patterns for the cutting and fitting of new panels. Once removed these were carefully stored. New framework section was fabricated using original section as a pattern. At the same time

replacement lower- and upper-deck stress panels were fabricated. Although it is common for lower-deck stress panels and framework to be replaced in a restoration, it is less usual for those between decks to need replacement. Clearly severe water ingress and body movement had taken their toll on 1397's whole structure.

As the whole framework structure was in need of replacement, the team decided to take out the engine and gearbox, freeing up the rear bulkhead area, which would allow access for its replacement. This was a tricky job requiring accurate measurement and fabrication and took many months to complete. Additionally all body bearers and two chassis outriggers were replaced.

Following this a new lower-saloon floor was fitted using marine plywood. This then gave a platform to replace ceiling panels on both the upper- and lower-decks, as the original ones were very battle-scarred. For similar reasons the bulkhead around the driver's area and the platform was replaced, including the fabrication of a new cab door.

As mentioned, 1397 had few seats and in the main those from the donor Atlantean were fitted as replacements. However, these had been recovered at some point by London Country in a more modern-style moquette which did not look authentic. Original style coloured vinyl had to be sourced and the seats and backs were sent to a professional upholsterer. At the same time the seat frames and stands were powder coated in original dark brown. To complete the internal refurbishment new Formica-style side covering in correct pattern had to be sourced to replace the original, which was in poor condition. Finally 'Treadmaster'-style lino was laid prior to fitting seat frames, seat cushions and backs.

## MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL

As is usually the case when undertaking a major restoration, the opportunity was taken to overhaul mechanical and electrical components. This included such items as fitting new replacement brake drums, brake chambers, rear springs, replacing fuel and air pipe work and so on. As is usual with RVPT restorations, new tyres were fitted.

On the electrical side, the saloon lights were replaced by those from the donor as the originals were in poor shape. Additionally external lights were replaced by correct pattern new units. Heater motors

and fans were replaced as the originals had stopped functioning (probably many years ago!). The switch control panel in the driver's cab was also replaced by an unused one. Wiring was replaced as needed as the above work progressed. Starter motor, alternator, regulator, compressor and fuel pump were all overhauled by specialist firms, as were most valves.

The most satisfying part of any restoration is the final preparation for painting. The preparation included rubbing down of bare aluminium and fibreglass, sealing of beading, filling of any small dints and blemishes which can occur during re-panelling etc. Gerard learned a great deal from RVPT resident bodybuilder Steve Dawson on just what is involved (and what time it takes!) to correctly prepare a bus for painting.

The final painting stage was undertaken by RVPT member and professional painter Matt Sourhart. Matt uses the traditional brush method and we think most people will agree the end result is stunning.

## LAUNCH

The above may sound straightforward, but in reality it took seven years to complete and many issues had to be overcome to achieve the final result. Nevertheless seeing the completed vehicle has made everything worthwhile and there is a real sense of achievement that RVPT has the sole surviving Ribble Park Royal Atlantean in its operational fleet.

The vehicle was launched at the RVPT Lytham Hall Running Day on 31 August 2015, performing faultlessly and gaining much favourable comment. Hopefully it will be a regular performer for years to come.

The above gives a useful reminder about the magnitude of restoring a preserved bus. It takes a great deal of time, skill and commitment, not to mention finance (many thousands of pounds!) and certainly isn't for the faint-hearted. Although extensive, 1397's restoration is by no means untypical of what it takes to turn a vehicle around from unrestored to operational condition.

Many thanks to Gerard and Ray Bignell for their help with this feature, not forgetting Douglas who did the driving. Gerard would especially like to thank Steve Dawson who did much of the bodywork restoration on 1397. His experience includes time at East Lancs and Optare.





Above: **Nearside of 1397 showing the distinctive Park Royal front and rounded roof dome.** SIMON GILL

Right: **Upper-deck looking like new with Leyland National pattern seats.** JAN GILL

Far right: **Part of the restoration team, from left to right: Steve Dawson, Dave Holden and owner Gerard Butler.** RAY BIGNELL

Below: **Nearside rear — poppy red was not popular in the 1970s, but it is now!** SIMON GILL





# RIBBLE

## Recalled

*This month we bring you a selection of Ribble buses from the 1960s, '70s and '80s.*



Representing a large number of Leyland PD3s taken into the Ribble fleet during the late-1950s is No 1523 (KCK 869), a Burlingham-bodied Leyland PD3/4, vintage 1958. This bus ended its Ribble career as a driver-trainer at Bootle. The PD3 fleet was bodied by both Burlingham and Metro-Cammell.



Ribble was amongst early customers for the Leyland Atlantean, purchasing 149 PDRI/Is between 1959 and 1962. Highbridge Metro-Cammell-bodied No 1648 (NCK 637) was new in 1960, and was, upon withdrawal, sold to Rhodes of Guiseley, Leeds. In 1978 the bus moved on to Bedminster Coaches, Bristol, ending its days with Celtic Coaches of Burry Port, Carmarthenshire.



Some early Atlanteans employed a semi-lowbridge layout. Daimler's Fleetline with its drop-centre rear axle, obviating the need for the lower-saloon gangway to rise at the rear, was to solve the problem, Leyland following behind with a comparable version of the Atlantean. Thus a relatively small number of semi-lowbridge Atlanteans with the rear upper-saloon incorporating a nearside sunken gangway to bring down the overall height were built. One of the largest users was Ribble which purchased 44 examples including 1960-built No 1657 (NRN 567), seen here in Carlyle in September 1977. No 1657 was another vehicle to end its Ribble days as a driver-trainer



Right: No 1955 (ECK 955E) was an example of the drop-centre rear axle PDRI/2 version, of which Ribble purchased 25, 10 with Alexander bodies in 1966 and a further 15, including No 1955, the following year.

Below: Ribble took a total of 60 Marshall-bodied Bristol REs, other customers of this unusual combination being South Wales, Western Welsh, East Midland, Aldershot & District, Southdown and North Western. For many years they were a common sight in Cumbria and the Lake District, with two 1971 RESL6Ls, Nos 312/4 (LRN 312/4J) being captured in this 1985 view.



Left: No 305 (LRN 305J) was one of a number of Bristol RESL6Ls to end up in the Falkland Islands as construction site transports during the rebuilding of the aerodrome at Port Stanley following the Falklands War, receiving raised suspension and Leyland badging before departure. Bristol VRT/SL3 No 3052 (OCK 985K) had been new in 1972. Later transferred to Eastern Counties, this bus is today a star at the East Anglia Transport Museum. As suggested on the blinds, this is Ulverston depot.



# HI A stairway to Heaven!

Before sheeting up the bus for the winter, Geoff Gilbert and I managed to cut and temporarily fit all the new open rear platform framework, together with our refabricated window pan and galvanised steel stress panels.

After we had laboriously cut out all the depressingly rotten metal and replaced with new, the bus was transformed, the exercise being a real morale booster. Some effort had been made in the past to fit heavy gauge galvanised offside internal stress and curved corner panels, although a good fit, unfortunately neither were deep enough so were removed and we began replacing literally everything below the cantrail. One advantage was that I was able to use the old corner panel as a template to get my friendly local fabricators to roll

two new ones, along with replacement interior steel coping straps which all fitted perfectly—all at a very reasonable cost.

## PLATFORM AND STAIRCASE

The original rear platform flooring had in the main long since disintegrated but would have been tongued and grooved boarding. What little bit remained showed signs of being covered in the same hessian backed linoleum as the rest of the floor with possibly aluminium anti-slip bars fixed on top.

With that in mind and with the staircase out for easy access we took the decision to provide a more weather resistant and stable base in the form of one 3/4in thick marine ply sheet. To get the shape right we stuck large sheets of A2 thin card together, marked out the pattern and trimmed it to fit in to the platform frame recess. This was then transferred to our plywood and cut out with a jigsaw. As there are numerous bolt heads and other frame fixings obstructing the sheet from lying flat, after test fitting the new flooring, we went around with a hammer and tapped it down to mark the underside so that the indents could be drilled out to fit over the various obstructions.





To ensure longevity and prevent water ingress, we then liberally soaked the underside and edges of the plywood with liquid fibreglass, before finishing off with a coat of black bitumen paint.

As mentioned in the last update, the staircase was finally extricated from the bus and all the paint eventually stripped off very kindly by various friends. Having got the unwieldy and heavy unit into the workshop, all corroded bolts holding the treads were cut off and the plywood removed. An assessment of the staircase revealed serious rot mainly on the outer curve half way up due to years of exposure to the elements from missing outer panelling, and around the bottom step where it fixed to the platform and in various tread supports. We debated whether it would be possible, after cutting out the rot, to weld in fabricated patches as it was a bit thin in places which could distort or end up making more holes as it was welded. The second option was to rivet in neatly cut plates on the hidden sides and use body filler to finish off. I decided to have a go at the first option of cutting out the rot and welding in new sections, which if successful would hopefully be neater and more of a proper repair with no crevices to trap moisture allowing future corrosion to form. This worked out satisfactorily despite a fair amount of hole chasing, the tricky part was replacing the curved section which was clamped and welded inch by inch to maintain the shape as the unsupported stairs were rather distorted once the rusted section was cut out.

Some of the wired edging had also rotted away and a tour of the farm buildings yielded some redundant sheep fencing which provided enough material to replace it! Hopefully the repairs haven't

distorted the staircase too much and it will all line up when refitted — only time will tell!

Some while ago I invested in some shot blasting equipment, the pressurised grit container resembling a converted fire extinguisher, which after an initial play I had put back in the box and forgotten about. My view was that it was rather time consuming and there was all the palaver of setting up the equipment, a suitable tarpaulin to catch the grit, a sieve to get the lumps out and the putting on of protective clothing to go with it. On top of that a good abrasive flap disc or wire brush was quicker and normally just as effective. The staircase, now repaired and solid again, still had areas of surface rust in awkward nooks and crannies that could not be reached by mechanical means.

With renewed enthusiasm, I picked a calm dry day and spread out a large

tarpaulin, dusted off the sand blaster, connected up all of the associated paraphernalia to the compressor and hauled the staircase outside. After donning the safety workwear, (it's amazing where the grit ends up if you don't seal up all of the openings in your clothing), I was about to commence operations when I sensed out of the corner of my protective hood that Polly the farm dog had decided that something interesting maybe about to happen, had levered herself from the comfort of her workshop armchair and had sat down right next to me as a spectator. As I hadn't any suitable protective clothing that fitted her to hand this was obviously not going to be an option! Much to her disappointment she was reluctantly removed to the safety of the driver's seat of Ian Townsend's ex-Wrights of Newark Duple Dominant-bodied Volvo B58, which still afforded



Opposite: **It's 8 September 1973 at Bowbridge Road Depot. 1949 W Gash & Sons Roberts-bodied Daimler CVD6 DD6 (KNN 959) prepares for the afternoon school run.** TERRY WALKER

Clockwise from top left: **Graham grinding away now redundant platform door pillar.** GEOFF GILBERT

**Replacement metalwork installed.** GRAHAM BROWN

**Previous enclosed platform doors layout before removal.** GRAHAM BROWN

**Original open platform layout reinstated.** GRAHAM BROWN





her a grandstand view of the proceedings! I then proceeded to gently blast the rust away from all the crevices, resulting in a successful if time consuming exercise due to the fact that the container has to be refilled at regular intervals with fresh recycled glass medium.

With the stairs now rust free, a thin coat of body filler was applied to smooth out the welded seams together with a light sand, followed by a spray coat of etching primer and they looked as good as the day they were manufactured (well nearly!).

### PLATES AND LIGHTS

Although hardly a very pressing task, as a morale lifter over the winter I had brought home the rather decayed original number plates for possible renovation. The front plate was not too bad but had been repainted several times. So to make a proper job of it I decided to drill out the rivets on the rear and try and remove the fragile three-dimensional letters for reuse. They were made by Blumels and seem to be manufactured from white Bakelite type material which had turned

Left: **Laying out card template for replacement platform floor.**  
GRAHAM BROWN

Below: **Graham cutting out new plywood flooring.** GEOFF GILBERT





rather brittle. The rear plate had suffered more and the corner of the aluminium plate had corroded away with some of the letters falling apart on removal. Although a replica plate would only cost around £30, I decided that if I could save the old letters it would look more authentic. I found a suitable piece of scrap aluminium panel, cut a replacement backing plate, copied the holes over and carefully glued all the pieces of the letters back together. With a bit of polyester filler and some slightly creamy 'Rover Arum White' paint for the figures both the plates look spot on and will hopefully stand up to the weather for another 70 years !

When John Marshall originally passed the bus on to me, he kindly included a folder containing some historical paperwork which contained a facsimile of the original 1949 registration particulars and record of road licences issued. The first licence was for only four months from 1 September 1949 and cost £30 4s 0d, followed by a full year at £86 8s 0d, which seems quite a lot of money for the period to me. I had read a magazine article about Terry Orchard who had researched the history of these licences and the styles of the various local authority stamps. He was able to supply me with very reasonably priced accurate replicas of both road and operator's licence discs for the Daimler issued by Nottingham County Council, with very neat authentically hand-written detail entries.

Another task for the winter was the refurbishment of the lower saloon light fittings, most suffering from surface rust from years of condensation rather than water ingress, but a couple seemed to have come off rather worse, sporting large holes in their metal surrounds. As these were shaped to fit the curved ceiling, rather than try and replicate new examples, after paint stripping, I set about soaking them all in a bath of Deox C rust killer from Bilt & Hamber



for a couple of days taking care to keep the electrical connections dry. Most just then needed a light sand and a coat of primer, the more seriously damaged ones required repairing with fibre glass paste to bridge the holes, finished off with a skim of body filler. The bulb holders

cleaned up well and after painting the surrounds looked very presentable again.

With thanks as always to my hosts Ian and Jean Townsend for providing me with the comforts from home, Geoff Gilbert and Tony Marshall for invaluable help and Polly the dog for her enthusiastic support for my shot blasting efforts !



Top: **The refurbished staircase is ready for painting.**

Clockwise from upper left:  
**Corroded rear numberplate.**

**Refurbished number plates.**

**Corroded interior saloon light fittings.**

**Rejuvenated and painted saloon light fittings.** All: GRAHAM BROWN



NIGEL APPLEFORD brings us the second part of his overview of EFE's standard-floor Dennis Dart.

In *B&CP*, May we looked at the first batch of Dennis Darts from EFE. Here we look at the remaining models, EFE Nos. 20627-20652.

To re-cap, the Dennis Dart is a rear-engined single-deck bus chassis manufactured by Dennis (later Alexander-Dennis) in Guildford, Surrey. During its 18 years of production more than 11,000 were built. Most were purchased by United Kingdom operators, although small numbers were sold to North America, Australia, Hong Kong and Singapore. Some of the Hong Kong and Singapore buses later found their way back to the UK!

The Dart was a deregulation era bus conceived when the Hestair Group (owner of both Dennis and Duple) decided to produce a bus that was between a minibus and a full-sized single-decker. It was launched in 1988 and originally offered only with Duple Dartline bodywork. The bus was 2.3m-wide and initially available only in 9m length, the modular nature of both chassis and body meant it could be built with various length permutations and was later made available in lengths of



**The prototype for EFE 20652, the latest release of the SPD Dart, is now preserved. Former Orpington Buses P411 MLA is seen at the South East Bus Festival, Detling on 1 April last. By the time this bus entered service the low-floor SLF Dart was already in production.**

8.5m and 9.8m. Power was by a Cummins 6BT engine coupled to an Allison AT545 gearbox; this drivetrain was also used in the MCW (and later Optare) Metrorider.

This model sold well to London Buses and to some operators outside London. Soon after its launch, Duple was sold to Plaxton and Duple's Blackpool plant was closed. Plaxton decided not to acquire the design rights of the Duple Dartline, which was instead sold to Carlyle Works, which continued producing this bodywork from 1991. Production then passed to Marshall of Cambridge in 1992 which bodied five Darts to this design. In 1993, Marshall updated the design to the C36 and later the C37.

In 1990, Wadham Stringer introduced its 'Portsdown' body for the Dart but it sold in small numbers and was replaced by the UVG Urbanstar in 1995. Wright of Ballymena also introduced its Handybus body for the Dart chassis in 1990. In early 1991, Plaxton launched the Pointer (which was initially designated as the Reeve Burgess Pointer as it was built at Reeve Burgess's plant). In 1991 building was transferred to Plaxton's Scarborough plant. Also in 1991, East Lancs introduced its EL2000 body, whilst the same year saw Alexander launch the Dash body for both the Dart and the Volvo B6. Another contender entering the market at the same time was the Northern Counties Paladin. Northern Counties was bought out by Plaxton in 1995.

As the low-floor single-decker buses became more popular in the late-1990s, orders for standard-floor Darts dropped heavily and production of the SPD Dart ceased in 1998. The Pointer, also available on the Volvo B6 chassis, had become the most successful of the midibus bodies.

The Dart with Plaxton Pointer body was introduced to the EFE range in April 1996 and was produced in no less than 56



**Stagecoach re-imported a number of Darts from Hong Kong. These were easily recognised by their Suttrak air-conditioning pods and lack of opening windows. As the air-con failed, opening windows were fitted. This EFE model of Stagecoach Devon 742 (N742 XDV) was released in February 2001.**

**Municipal operators, those that were left by then, also bought the Dart. Chester City Transport operated its 67 (N459 EEY), the EFE model of which was released in September 2002.**





Although not buying them new, Southern Vectis acquired Pointer-bodied Darts from fellow Go South Coast operator Brighton & Hove, which had acquired them with the Brighton Blue Bus fleet. There have been two releases of identical buses with different destinations/fleetnumbers/registrations. First release, 20636 — 902 (M78 CYJ) is at the front and later 20646 — 900 (M73 CYJ) at the rear. 900 has been named *Cowlease Chine*. The models were released in July 2007 and March 2013 respectively.



There have been two releases in the current Stagecoach livery; an example in Stagecoach Southdown markings was released in January 2008 — 32096 (M96 WBW) as an EFE subscriber offer and the standard issue of a Stagecoach Hull example — 714 (M87 WBW) in July 2005. Interestingly both buses started off in the Thames Transit (later Stagecoach Oxford) fleet as dual-door buses.



Left: North Western Premier 1173 (Y173 YKA), route branded for its 37/38 service between Warrington and Altrincham, was released in October 2009. A similar model of 1172 (Y172 YKA) was released in 2014 working route 38. Another model in Arriva North Western livery (1179, M179 YKA) was released in 1998.

Right: The Dart found buyers in Scotland, Clydeside being amongst those operating the type. Again there have been two releases in this livery, 401 (M65 FDS) in March 2010 (illustrated) and 402 (M67 FDS) in September 2015.



Still in Scotland, independent West Coast Motors operated Darts. EFE released a model of its J60 WCM in March 2008. Although the livery might be fairly simple it does add variety when compared with the larger fleets.



At the other end of the country Western National, then part of Badgerline, purchased numbers of Plaxton Pointer-bodied Darts. This model of L402 VCV in the colourful red/white/blue livery complete with badger was released in May 2005.





Arriva has featured in a number of releases. These are an Arriva The Shires Dart — 3102 (L200 BUS) and Arriva London North example — LDR49 (P849 PWW). No 3102 is in the then standard fleet livery and LDR49 in the original London livery. No 3102 (L200 BUS) was acquired with the operations of Lucketts (Lucky Bus) of Watford in 1998. The models were released in November 2012 and February 2009 respectively.

First livery has also been quite common on the Dart. This example was from the First Borders fleet (40902/277 (N614 XJM), although it was new to First in Berkshire. This model was released in January 2005, the fading pink band is particularly well done.

Last of the Dart releases (currently) is this example (20652) in Orpington Buses livery. It was amongst the last Gilbow models to be released in July 2016. Strangely similar is the rear model (20644) of Uxbridge Buses D36 (N636 ACF), released in September 2010.



there are improvements that modellers, as opposed to collectors, might wish to make. The inside edges of the windscreen could be painted either black or dark grey (the windscreen is fitted from outside and can be prone to falling out, believe me), the windows could have the slider detail picked out in black, mirrors fitted and the interiors painted/detailed but the basic model is good enough for most of us. The finishes are generally very good although some of the earlier more complicated schemes do seem to suffer bleed between the different colours. Destinations and fleet names/numbers seem crisp enough so all considered a good all round package.

It can be seen from the fleetlist that from 2013 EFE was re-issuing models with different fleet number/registrations/destinations presumably to move remaining over-stocks. Despite the sad demise of EFE last year there are still a good number of these models available both new and pre-owned.



different variants up to July 2016, hence dividing this review into two parts. As a relatively modern vehicle it was somewhat of a new direction for EFE, but seems to have proved quite popular. Construction follows EFE's usual single-deck principle of a die-cast shell (in this case in one piece) with a plastic base and glazing inserted as a number of separate pieces. Plastic wheels with rubber tyres on steel axles are also provided, the whole vehicle

being held together with steel poles driven into plastic plugs although the front pole is very prominent when the model is viewed head-on. Interior detail in plastic is also provided in various single colours with black steering wheel.

The design is quite boxy and EFE has done an extremely good job in capturing the look of the real vehicle, choosing the 9.8m variant as the base for the model. As befits a casting now over 20 years old

## FLEETLIST

20627	Stagecoach Devon General 742 (N742 XDV)	February 2001	20640	London Buslines 628 (P628 CGM)	September 2008
20628	First Southampton 1402 (N466 ETR)	October 2001	20641	MTL London DP246 (M504 ALP)	November 2008
20629	Chester City Transport 67 (N459 EEY)	September 2002	20642	Arriva London North LDR49 (P849 PWW)	February 2009
20630	First Capital 774 (N974 EHJ)	April 2003	20643	Clydeside 401 (M65 FDS)	March 2010
20631	Brighton & Hove 79 (M79 CYJ)	November 2003	20644	Uxbridge Buses D36 (N636 ACF)	September 2010
20632	First Borders 40902/277 (N614 XJM)	January 2005	20645	Arriva The Shires 3102 (L200 BUS)	November 2012
20632DL	First Leeds 3277 (N277 JUM)	March 2008	20646	Southern Vectis 900 (M73 CYJ)	March 2013
20633	Western National L402 VCV	May 2005	20647	North Western Premier 1172 (M173 YKA)	September 2014
20634	Stagecoach Hull 714 (M87 WBW)	July 2005	20648	Brighton & Hove 87 (J987 JNJ)	October 2014
20635	Stagecoach East London PD410 (N410 MBW)	October 2006	20649	Arriva South London LDR5 (N675 GUM)	November 2014
20636	Southern Vectis 902 (M78 CYJ)	July 2007	20650	Clydeside 402 (M67 FDS)	September 2015
20637	West Coast Motors J60 WCM	March 2008	20651	First Capital Citybus 782 (N982 EHJ)	May 2016
20638*	Stagecoach Southdown 32096 (M96 WBW)	January 2008	20652	Orpington Buses P411 MLA	July 2016
20639	North Western Premier 1173 (M173 YKA)	October 2009			

\* EFE Subscriber Offer





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**EFE 25711 London Transport DMS  
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Reg Number - GHV 63N

Fleet Number - DMS1063

Route – 40

Destination - VICTORIA

**RRP: £39.95 – OUR PRICE: £33.96**



**EFE 28825 London Transport  
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Reg Number - BCK 706R

Fleet Number - N/A

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The 50th anniversary of a small municipal's demise, the 51st birthday of an RML and a great use for a restoration project are all celebrated by NICK LARKIN this month.

## HARTLEPOOL BLUES

If it had a soul, this new to London Transport Bristol K6A must have wondered what on earth had happened to it.

No more sweeping majestically through the streets of the Capital, but instead being transported to the North East, painted blue and cream and being forced, with three of its sisters to form the new Hartlepool Corporation motorbus fleet, bought to run its share of the former trolleybus service ran jointly with neighbouring West Hartlepool.

The buses were originally to be housed and maintained by United but a last minute disagreement meant the contract was awarded to independent Bee Line Roadways instead.

This photograph hardly does HGC 238's new home justice — it appears to be a combination of bombed-out buildings, abandoned children and feral dogs — and that's from just one photo!

Four new AEC Regent Vs with Roe bodywork (TUP 856-9) replaced the Bristols in 1956.



This year commemorates half a century since the demise of Hartlepool Corporation, which was amalgamated into West Hartlepool in April 1967.

At least the former Hartlepool Corporation can boast one of the highest proportions of preserved vehicles — AEC Regent V No 4 (TUP 859), is undergoing long-term restoration.





## 'BLITZ' ON BUS

No-one can ever expect even one of Britain's top transport museums to restore every bus and coach quickly, but the London Bus Museum has found a unique use for one vehicle that is on the waiting list. New to London Passenger

Transport Board, 1937 AEC Regent STL2093 (DLU 92) has carefully had panels removed and now stands as part of a display commemorating damage to buses in World War 2.

The idea, which certainly put a new twist on the term 'blitzing a restoration'

certainly works, and if anyone else wants a bus which looks as if it had been in an explosion, I think I have one or two that might suffice!



## A BUS WITH NO NAME

This month's musical offering featuring omnibuses comes from the group America, best known for their 1971 hit, 'A Horse with No Name.' Their album 'Here & Now' dates from 2007, however, and features an omnibus that's definitely 'Off Route'. Anyone know what the vehicle is? Did all this publicity find it a restorer? Altogether now: 'I've been through the desert on a bus with no name . . .'







## DONINGTON

A visit to cover a classic motor racing event at Donington Park led to some interesting omnibus discoveries, one of which made us feel old.

Many classic coaches have survived due to having been converted into racing car transporters, and of course in theory they could be put back to coaches again one day.

Seen at Donington were TBO 275S, a rare Caetano Estoril-bodied Ford R1114 new to Cleverley of Pontypool in August 1977 and ONL 771X, a Duple Dominant III-bodied Leyland Leopard previously registered HIL 5838. Also present was AEC Routemaster RML2658, now a bar, which presented rather a shock. This was not because of the conversion of the bus, but the notice welcoming us aboard *Rosie*, which had not only travelled 2.8m, but was 51 years old. A half-century RML? Surely not! Argh!



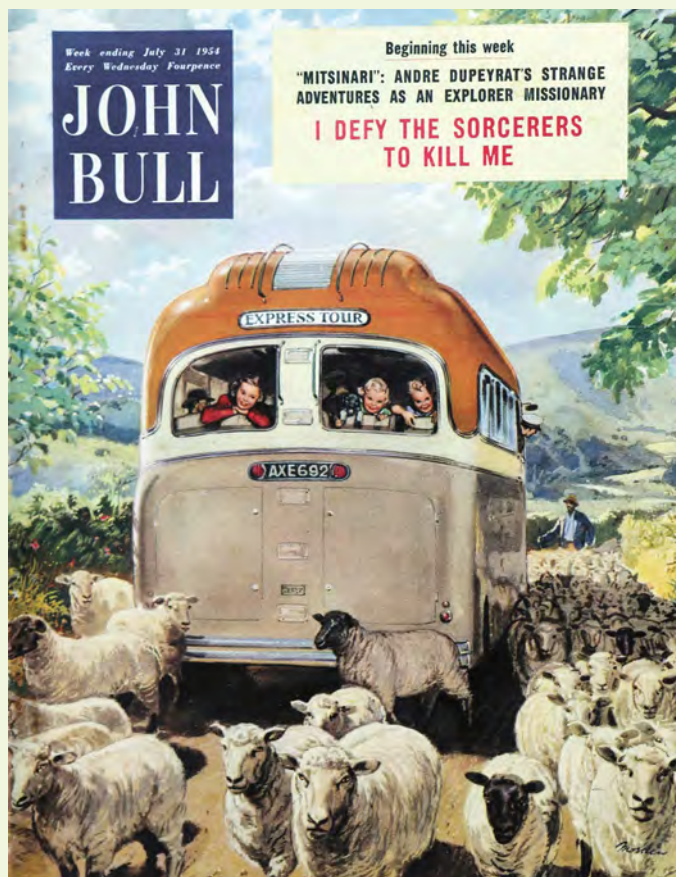


## JOHN BULL CLASSICS

*John Bull*, in its postwar incarnation as a weekly magazine, published from the late 1940s until 1964, was renowned for the quality of its covers, and here are two with omnibus connections.

The 24 March 1953 issue gives the dapper gentleman on the left the chance for chivalry as he saves the lady from an oily splash from a London Transport RT that must have been travelling at 80mph to throw up so much water.

Readers of the 31 July 1954 issue were treated to the rural vista of a wonderful looking London-registered coach on an 'express tour' which no longer lived up to its name due to a mass sheep invasion.



## NUTTY TIME!

Anyone know what happened to this former London RT seen parked on the west side of Holman Avenue, Seattle in 2004? And what happened at Nutty Time? We dread to think.



Picture:  
RICHARD BRADBPEAR

## TIMELY ADVICE

It seems that Manchester Corporation didn't have much faith in the ability of its customers to adapt to the joys of the 24-hour clock. One side of this 50-year-old leaflet suggests 'a few minutes practice with the examples overleaf will help to convince you.' It might as well have added 'thickies'.

The other side depicts an actual clock with the additional advice:

'It really is very simple', and 'you will soon get the hang of it'. Goodness knows what Manchester Corporation would have published had it been around for decimalisation in 1971.



## BUSES ARE CHANGING TO THE 24 HOUR CLOCK

Many of the principal road passenger undertakings of Britain have decided to use the 24 hour clock for timetable purposes which will conform to those of British Railways and international air lines. This undertaking now intends to follow suit and this will mean that "a.m." and "p.m." will not now be used.



**EASY TO READ**  
A few minutes practice with the examples overleaf will help to convince you.

Issued by the  
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**AEC Reliance/Berkhof (1983) reboddy**. Taken over as a restoration project but sadly can't give her the time and attention she deserves to get her back on the road. Price: £4,500 [goodfellowtravel@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:goodfellowtravel@yahoo.co.uk)

**Ellen Smith Harrington-bodied Leopard EDS 584B ex-6733 DK**. Needs work, but in running order. £2,500. Call Martin 07507164089.



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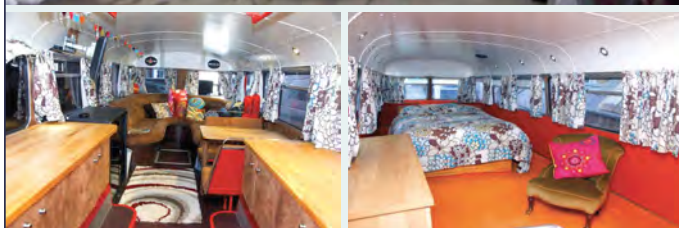
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**Buses of London** by Colin H Curtis: £3, 1967 Buses Annual: £10, Autobussen in Nederlands by Martin Wallast (Dutch text): £2, Golden Age of Buses by Charles Klapper: £5, Buses Trolleys & Trams by Chas S. Dunbar: £3, The STLs by Ken Blacker: £20. Can post at cost within UK. Telephone: John Wakefield 01223 843802



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## EVENTS

**EVENT ORGANISERS:** Please send details of your events direct to Sandra Lamb for inclusion in this column as soon as possible, and in all cases at least three months in advance of the date of the event. We regret that otherwise we cannot guarantee inclusion. E-mail [presbusts2@btinternet.com](mailto:presbusts2@btinternet.com) or by post to 12 Redland Close, Aldermans Green Industrial Estate, Coventry, CV2 2NP.

### SUNDAY 4 JUNE

**Glasgow Vintage Vehicle Trust Open Sunday.** Bridgeton Bus Garage, for events the public entrance is in Broad Street, Glasgow. Open: 11.00–16.00. Admission: Adults £ 3.50, Child/OAP £2, Family £ 8. Details: Glasgow Vintage Vehicle Trust (Scottish Charity No. SC034066), 76 Fordneuk Street, Glasgow, G40 3AH. E-mail: [info@gvvt.org](mailto:info@gvvt.org). Website: [www.gvvt.org](http://www.gvvt.org).

**St Helens North West Museum of Road Transport Classic Car Show.** Celebrating the best of the motor industry in Britain and abroad. 11.00–16.00. Free heritage bus rides, light refreshments. Museum is near St Helens central rail and bus stations Free car parking nearby. Admission: Adult £4.25, Concessions £3.25, Children 5-17 £2.50, Family (2+2) £12.50. Further information: [www.nwmort.co.uk](http://www.nwmort.co.uk) or Tel: 01744 451681. North West Museum of Road Transport, The Old Bus Depot, 51 Hall Street, St Helens WA10 1DU.

**Didcot Transport Rally** with vintage bus services on former GWR Road Motors routes from Didcot organised by Thames Valley & Great Western Omnibus Trust in association with Didcot Railway Centre. Contacts: TV&GWOT, 16 Samor Way, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 8RF. e-mail: [jonathan.radley@btinternet.com](mailto:jonathan.radley@btinternet.com) website: [www.tvagwot.org.uk](http://www.tvagwot.org.uk) for entry forms and details of programme availability before the event.

**Kirkby, Liverpool. NWVRT Annual Running and Open Day.** Based at our Kirkby Headquarters, Unit 2, Charley Wood Road, Kirkby Industrial Estate, Kirkby L33 7SG, we will be again running a network of free services with some of our buses, timetable and event Guide will be available. Sales stands and refreshments inside main building. If you would like to book a vehicle or stall, details can be found at [www.nwvrt.co.uk](http://www.nwvrt.co.uk) or call 07753 248053

### HCVS Tyne-Tees Run.

**LT Country Bus Rally, Hertford.** Details (SAE please): Country Bus Rallies, 19 Hampton Way, East Grinstead RH19 4SG.



SATURDAY 10 JUNE

**Bournemouth Bus Rally & Running Day**, Kings Park. Details: jonathanhawkins387@yahoo.co.uk

SUNDAY 11 JUNE

**South Yorkshire Transport Museum Open Day** including Model Transport Exhibition at South Yorkshire Transport Museum, Unit 9, Waddington Way, Aldwarke, Rotherham S65 3SH. Open 10.30–16.00, shop and café open. Free heritage shuttle bus from Rotherham bus station (Stand C1) at 11.45, returning from Museum at 14.00. Admission £4, Concessions £2.50, Family £10 (max. two adults). Further details from: info@sytm.co.uk or Tel: 07852 298082. Details also on website: www.sytm.co.uk/models

**The Southsea Spectacular**. Southsea Common, Portsmouth from 10.00. Full event and contact details: www.southernbusevents.co.uk

**Barry Festival of Transport**. Organised by Cardiff Transport Preservation Group. Vehicle display at Barry Island and open day at the Depot. (Bus Depot, Broad Street, Barry, South Wales, CF62 7AH). Hundreds of classic cars, buses and commercials on display around Barry Island promenade, preserved buses providing transport from the park and ride site to the Depot and Barry Island. Refreshments and many stalls available. Please look at the website ([www.ctpg.co.uk](http://www.ctpg.co.uk)) and Facebook page for updates or e-mail: info@ctpg.co.uk

**The 49th East Coast Run Hull–Bridlington**, finishing at Sewerby cliff top car park, invites all Buses, Coaches, Commercials, Cars, Vans and Motorcycles over 15 years old, Transport related stalls at Sewerby. Entry forms from Kath Kirk, EYTCC, 11 St Augustine Drive, Skirlough, East Yorkshire HU11 5EX. e-mail: events@eytcc.org.uk

**National Tramway Museum. Classic Transport Gathering**. 10.00–17.30. Crich Tramway Village, near Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 5DP. Details: e-mail: enquiry@tramway.co.uk, tel: 01773 854321 or visit: www.tramway.co.uk

FRIDAY–SUNDAY 16–18 JUNE

**Royal Blue and Associated Motorways Run**, Thames Valley & Great Western Omnibus Trust, from Northampton to Bournemouth, Bournemouth to Exmouth and Exeter to the Home Counties. Contacts: Colin Billington, Ledger Farm, Forest Green Road, Fifield, Maidenhead, Berks, SL6 2NR, phone: 07990 505373, e-mail: enquiries@tvagwot.org.uk website: www.tvagwot.org.uk for entry forms and details of programme availability before the event.

SATURDAY 17 JUNE

**The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft. 1940s Trolleyday**, Sandtoft, nr Doncaster. Details: 01724 711391 or visit: www.sandtoft.org.uk

SUNDAY 18 JUNE

**East Anglia Transport Museum Dad's Day Out**. 12.00–16.30. Why not bring dad along today for a father's day treat and possibly have a go at conducting one of our trolley buses or even guarding our train, all under supervision of course. East Anglia Transport Museum, Chapel Rd, Carlton Colville, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 8BL. Telephone (01502) 518459, e-mail: admin@eatransportmuseum.co.uk or visit website: www.eatransportmuseum.co.uk for full details.

**The Transport Museum Wythall. Fathers' Day Out**. Museum open 11.00–17.00 (last admission 16.30). Chance for Dads to enjoy big boys' toys! Classic bus and miniature steam train rides. Admission: £7 adult, £3.50 child. Family tickets available. For further details contact the Transport Museum, Chapel Lane, Wythall B47 6JX. Telephone: 01564 826471, e-mail: enquiries@wythall.org.uk or visit website: www.wythall.org.uk

**Swansea Bus Museum Father's Day Running Event**. Fathers and families are welcome to join in with our Father's Day running event. Visiting vehicles of all genres are welcome to display in our large yard. SAI Business Park, Langdon Road (East), Port Tennant, Swansea SA1 8QY. See our website www.swanseabusmuseum.com for further details or e-mail: SwanseaBM@outlook.com or Tel: 01792 732832.

**Peak Park Preserved Bus Gathering**. Based at Rowsley South station of Peak Heritage Railway (on A6 midway between Bakewell and Matlock, Derbyshire), 0930–1700. All preserved buses (not current) are welcome. Display on 'both sides of the track'. Judging and awards. Large stall area. Frequent preserved bus services through Peak District scenery, including connections with Peak Rail's steam trains. Details and entry forms: www.chesterfield123.org.uk and www.transpirebus.org or by post from Dennis Vickers, 14, Whitting Mews, Holland Road, Old Whittington, Chesterfield, S41 9HF.

**The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft. Trolleyday** with East Yorkshire Thoroughbred Car Club Rally, Sandtoft, nr Doncaster. Details: 01724 711391 or visit: www.sandtoft.org.uk

**Scottish Vintage Bus Museum**, Lathalmond, Fife KY12 0SJ. Fife Historic Vehicle Club Festival of Historic Transport, (11.00–16.00). Details: www.svbm.org.uk

## SOUTHSEA SPECTACULAR

### SOUTHSEA COMMON 11<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2017



Sunshine guaranteed this year... fingers crossed!

@southseabus

Save the date - the Southsea Spectacular bus rally returns to Portsmouth again on Sunday 11 June.

- \* display of preserved and modern buses and coaches
- \* enthusiast stalls and light refreshments
- \* free vintage bus services to The Hard Interchange and along the seafront to Eastney
- \* 11th June 2017, Southsea Common, 10.00am–4.30pm

Entry forms can be downloaded now from our website - we look forward to seeing you there on the day!

www.southernbusevents.co.uk

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The FRIENDS OF KING ALFRED BUSES present an  
**ARCHIVE FILM SHOW** on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2017 at 2.0pm  
At the Discovery Centre, Jewry Street, Winchester SO23 8SB



### BYGONE BRITAIN – YESTERDAY'S TRANSPORT

A completely new event is a special screening of historic films of yesterday's transport in southern England presented live by film archivist Rob Foxon.

Highlight of the show will be the first time screening of a 1935 film with local streets, businesses and attractions in Winchester.

We also see a winter tour in Hampshire, Devon and Dorset by iconic Bedford OB coach in 1949, trolleybuses in Bournemouth in 1951 and much more!

Living history on the silver screen!

**Tickets** price £8.00 from Winchester Discovery Centre  
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**Friends of King Alfred Buses** (Registered charity 1078631)  
34 High Street, Nutfield, Redhill RH1 4HQ.

## 2nd Basildon Bus Rally

The most family friendly bus rally in Britain!

Supported by **Clacton Bus Rally** and **Presbus PUBLISHING**

**Sunday 25th June 2017 10am - 4pm**

**Barleylands Farm Park, Billericay, Essex, CM11 2UD**



**FREE entry FREE parking FREE bus rides**

Large display of vintage and modern buses & coaches

Enthusiasts Market

Lots of fun for all the family including a Disco Dome, Bouncy Castle, Wet Sponge Throwing, Hook a Duck, Smash the Crockery, Face Painting, Crafts, Squirt Water from a Fire Engine and more!



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www.basildonbusrally.com



## Classic Bus & Coach Rally

**Sunday 2nd July 2017**



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- Refreshments



Got a vehicle? Contact Geoff Clark—geoffrey.clark3@ntlworld.com

07590 992627 / 01332 669497



## SUNDAY 18 JUNE

**Oxford Bus Museum Father's Day Event.** 10.30–16.30, free vintage bus rides at 12.15 and 14.45. Station Yard, Long Hanborough, Oxfordshire OX29 8LA. Details: 01296 337622 or visit: [www.oxfordbusmuseum.org.uk](http://www.oxfordbusmuseum.org.uk)

**National Tramway Museum Horse Tram Day.** 10.00–17.00. Crich Tramway Village, near Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 5DP. Details: e-mail: [enquiry@tramway.co.uk](mailto:enquiry@tramway.co.uk), tel 01773 854321 or visit: [www.tramway.co.uk](http://www.tramway.co.uk)

## FRIDAY/ SATURDAY 23/24 JUNE

**London Transport Museum, Depot Discovery Tours at Acton Depot.** Museum Depot, Acton Town, 2 Museum Way, 118-120 Gunnersbury Lane W3 9BQ. All tours approx two hours. Tickets must be pre-booked online or via our Ticket Office on 0207 565 7298 (open 10.00–17.30 daily) Under 16s must be accompanied by an adult. Adult £12, Concession £10, under 16s must be accompanied by an adult. Tickets must be pre-booked. Details: 020 7565 7298 or visit: [www.ltmuseum.co.uk](http://www.ltmuseum.co.uk)

## SATURDAY 24 JUNE

**Ipswich Transport Museum Transport & Model Festival.** Visit three great attractions on one ticket — the Transport Museum, Ipswich Railway Modellers Association HQ and the Ipswich Model Engineering Society. Open 10.00–16.30. A free bus service links the sites and Scograil Model Railways using historic vehicles. A modellers dream! Other attractions en route. See website for details. All attraction entry ticket is £9.50 (accompanied children £1) Ipswich Transport Museum, Old Trolleybus Depot, Cobham Road, Ipswich IP3 9JD. Details: 01473 715666 or visit: [www.ipswichtransportmuseum.co.uk](http://www.ipswichtransportmuseum.co.uk)

## SATURDAY/SUNDAY 24/25 JUNE

**The First Shetland Commercial Vehicle Show.** Cunningsburgh Show Field, Shetland. The commercial show is to coincide with the return of a Bedford OB Coach which spent all of its working life in the Shetland Isles. There will be a host of attractions over the weekend showcasing: trucks, buses, tractors and stationary engines covering a vast range of eras. Further information can be obtained by contacting: e-mail: [john.robinson221@icloud.com](mailto:john.robinson221@icloud.com) phone: 01595 830220, letter: SCVPS c/o John Robinson, Stroma, Olligarth, Whiteness, Shetland, ZE29GJ or on Facebook: Shetland Commercial Vehicle Preservation Society.

## SUNDAY 25 JUNE. BASILDON BUS RALLY

Barleylands Farm Park, Billericay, Essex. CM11 2UD 'The most family friendly bus rally in Britain!' Free entry, free parking and free bus rides, 10.00–16.00. More details on: [www.basildonbusrally.com](http://www.basildonbusrally.com) and [www.facebook.com/basildonbusrally](http://www.facebook.com/basildonbusrally)

**West End Festival Vintage Bus Service.** Free vintage bus services in the west end of Glasgow to and from Riverside Museum (the Museum of Transport). Details: e-mail: [info@gvvt.org](mailto:info@gvvt.org) or see website: [www.gvvt.org](http://www.gvvt.org).

**London Bus Museum Summer Event.** At the Museum, Brooklands Road, Weybridge, Surrey (Sat Nav: KT13 0SL). 10.00–17.00. Free parking at Museum. Details: Tel: 01932 837994, e-mail: [londonbusmuseum@btinternet.com](mailto:londonbusmuseum@btinternet.com) Website: [www.londonbusmuseum.com](http://www.londonbusmuseum.com)

## SATURDAY/SUNDAY 1/2 JULY

**North Norfolk Railway Vintage Transport Festival,** Holt station, NR25 6AJ. Free classic bus services from NNR stations and around. Sunday only: Classic car display. Entries and details: [bus@johnrstewart.co.uk](mailto:bus@johnrstewart.co.uk)

**The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft. Worldwide Weekend Trolleydays,** Sandtoft, nr Doncaster. Details: 01724 711391 or visit: [www.sandtoft.org.uk](http://www.sandtoft.org.uk)

## SUNDAY 2 JULY

**Oxford Bus Museum Vintage bus rides.** 10.30–16.30 with bus rides at 12.15 and 14.45. Station Yard, Long Hanborough, Oxfordshire OX29 8LA. Details: 01296 337622 or visit: [www.oxfordbusmuseum.org.uk](http://www.oxfordbusmuseum.org.uk)

**Eastbourne Vintage Bus Running Day,** organised by Country Bus Rallies and Eastbourne Classic Bus, based at railway station. Free services along seafront and through Meads, also to Pevensey Bay, Polegate, Beachy Head, Birling Gap and Hailsham. Contacts: Steven Wood, 97 Fordwich Rise, Hertford, SG14 2DF, phone: 07730 162605, e-mail: [steven.wood@clara.co.uk](mailto:steven.wood@clara.co.uk) Programmes £7.50 (A5 stamped addressed envelope) from Country Bus Rallies, 19 Hampton Way, East Grinstead, RH19 4SG from one month in advance, £8 on the day.

**Third Saltaire Historic Bus Running Day** presented by Keighley Bus Museum Trust, playing fields adjacent to Shipley Glen tramway with static vehicle displays, enthusiast stalls, on site catering and toilets. A large variety of buses will be running on various routes linking Saltaire, Shipley and Baildon with superb photographic opportunities. Shipley Glen tramway will be in full operation. 10.00–17.00. Further details or to enter a vehicle or sales stall please contact 07546 704558, e-mail: [enquiries@kbmt.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@kbmt.org.uk) or visit: [www.kbmt.org.uk](http://www.kbmt.org.uk)

**Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Bus and Coach Rally,** Ecclesbourne Valley Railway, Wirksworth, Derbyshire, DE4 4FB. Got a vehicle? For entries and enquiries please contact: Geoff Clark, 01332 669497 or 07590 992627. E-Mail: [geoffrey.clark3@ntlworld.com](mailto:geoffrey.clark3@ntlworld.com)

**St Helens. North West Museum of Road Transport Motorbike Day.** With lots of visiting classic bikes from all eras to see. 11.00–16.00. Free Heritage Bus Rides, light refreshments. Museum is near to St Helens Central rail and bus stations, free car parking nearby. Admission: Adult £4.25, Concessions £3.25, Children 5-17 £2.50, Family (2+2) £12.50. Further information from website: [www.nwmort.co.uk](http://www.nwmort.co.uk) or Tel: 01744 451681. North West Museum of Road Transport, The Old Bus Depot, 51 Hall Street, St Helens WA10 1DU.

**Glasgow Vintage Vehicle Trust Open Sunday.** Bridgeton Bus Garage, for events the public entrance is in Broad Street, Glasgow. 11.00–16.00. Admission prices: Adults £ 3.50, Child/OAP £2, Family £ 8. Details: Glasgow Vintage Vehicle Trust (Scottish Charity No. SC034066), 76 Fordneuk Street, Glasgow, G40 3AH. E-mail: [info@gvvt.org](mailto:info@gvvt.org). Website: [www.gvvt.org](http://www.gvvt.org).

## FRIDAY 7 JULY

**Fleur-de-Lys Annual Classic Vehicle Gathering.** Thornes Park, Wakefield. 16.00–dusk. Open to vehicles over 25 years of age. Contact: 01924 825866

## SATURDAY 8 JULY

**Lancashire Model Bus Show.** Organised by Model Bus Federation Lancashire and Cumbria Area. Nelson Independent Methodist Church, Netherfield Road, Nelson, Lancs. BB9 9AW. 1000–1600. Admission: Adults £3, accompanied children under 15 £1.50, under 5s free. Layouts, sales, trade stands etc. Refreshments available throughout the day. For further details, contact: [krdiggins@live.co.uk](mailto:krdiggins@live.co.uk)

## SATURDAY/SUNDAY 8/9 JULY

**East Anglia Transport Museum ECW 30th Anniversary Weekend.** 11.00–17.00 both days. Commemorating the closure of the famous Eastern Coach Works factory in Lowestoft 30 years ago, with a weekend full of visiting ECW-bodied vehicles from all over the country. Free park & ride and bus services to Lowestoft and Beccles as well as other excursions. BBQ in the park. East Anglia Transport Museum, Chapel Rd, Carlton Colville, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 8BL. Telephone (01502) 518459, e-mail: [admin@eatransportmuseum.co.uk](mailto:admin@eatransportmuseum.co.uk) or visit website: [www.eatransportmuseum.co.uk](http://www.eatransportmuseum.co.uk) for full details.

## SUNDAY 9 JULY

**11th Annual Peterborough Bus & Commercial Vehicle Rally** at Sacrewell Farm on the A47 near Peterborough, PE8 6HJ. 10.00–16.00. All preserved and modern buses, coaches and commercials welcome. Stalls also welcome. On site café, free bus service from and to Peterborough bus station and frequent free vintage bus trips to and from Nene Valley Preserved Railway. Free admission for entrants and public. Parking £5 (refunded against admission to Farm & Country Centre). Details/bus timetables/entry forms on the rally website: [www.busrally.co.uk](http://www.busrally.co.uk)





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*Or call/text 07487 314776. Please leave your details and we will get back to you.*

SYTT Riverside , Units 1, 2 and 3, Chesterton Road, Eastwood Training Estate,  
Eastwood, Rotherham, South Yorkshire. S65 1TD

## Tinkers Park Bus Rally

A Bus Rally and Model Railway Exhibition will be held at Tinkers Park



**Sunday 6th August 2017. 10:00am to 4:30pm.**  
**Adults £6    Under 16's £2**

**Model railway show • At least 23 layouts • Narrow gauge railway free rides**  
**Traction engine trailer free rides • Various transport related stands**  
**Organ museum • Programmes • On-site light refreshments**  
**Free bus service to and from site • Free car parking**  
**A272, Hadlow Down, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 4HS**

For more information please also visit [www.southdownnational.com](http://www.southdownnational.com) or [www.tinkerspark.com](http://www.tinkerspark.com)

Entry forms for vehicles and bus related trade stands to; Paul Llewellyn, "Oakview", Luxford Lane, Crowborough TN6 2PJ



SUNDAY 9 JULY

**Leyland Society Gathering.** Old Warden Aerodrome, near Biggleswade, Bedfordshire. Large area of hard standing opposite the main hangars for the vehicle display. Please note that normal entry charges will apply on the day covering the vehicle display, aircraft collection or Swiss Gardens. Two free entry tickets will be provided for each vehicle entry. Vehicle entry forms can be downloaded from the Society website or by sending an SAE to Gary Dwyer, 8 St. Mary's Close, West Street, Sompting, Lancing, West Sussex, BN15 0AF. All Leylands, including any non-Society members who wish to bring their vehicle, will be extended a warm welcome. Event details can be found on [www.leylandsociety.co.uk](http://www.leylandsociety.co.uk)

**Aston Manor Road Transport Museum. 30th Annual Open Day.** Vehicle displays, stalls and free bus services running throughout the day. Museum located at Shenstone Drive, off Northgate, Aldridge, West Midlands WS9 8TP. 10.30-16.00. Admission: £5 Adults, £2 Child, Family £13 (including event programme). Enquiries: 01922 454761, website: [www.amrtm.org](http://www.amrtm.org) or on Facebook (under the Museum name).

**South Yorkshire Transport Museum Open Day** at South Yorkshire Transport Museum, Unit 9, Waddington Way, Aldwarke, Rotherham S65 3SH. Open 10.30-16.00, shop and café open. Free heritage shuttle bus from Rotherham Bus Station (Stand C1) at 11.45, returning from Museum at 14.00. Admission £4, Concessions £2.50, Family £10 (max. two adults). Further details from: [info@sytcm.co.uk](mailto:info@sytcm.co.uk) or Tel: 07852 298082. Website: [www.sytcm.co.uk](http://www.sytcm.co.uk)

**Leatherhead Vintage Bus Running Day.** Further details from Amersham & District Motorbus Society, 68 Hitcham Road, Taplow, Maidenhead SL6 0LZ or e-mail: [info@amershammotorbussociety.co.uk](mailto:info@amershammotorbussociety.co.uk) or on Society website: [www.amershammotorbussociety.co.uk](http://www.amershammotorbussociety.co.uk)

**Burscough. Merseyside Transport Trust Open Day.** The Merseyside's annual Open Day at Osprey Place, Burscough Industrial Estate, Burscough, nr Ormskirk, L40 8TG. Further information: [www.mttrust.co.uk](http://www.mttrust.co.uk)

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E-mail: [rennison@cc-email.co.uk](mailto:rennison@cc-email.co.uk)

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**7th Annual Heath Common Transport Rally and Bus Running Day,** Wakefield WFI 5DB. 10.00-17.00. Organised by the West Riding Bus Group and in conjunction with the Yorkshire Thoroughbred Car Club. Free local bus services and feeder services from outlying districts. All vintage and classic vehicles welcome. Trade stands and food. Contact [www.wrbg.weebly.com](http://www.wrbg.weebly.com) for application forms. Also on Facebook. Email [wrbg@talktalk.net](mailto:wrbg@talktalk.net) or Tel: 07774 626475

**Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway 9th Bus Rally and Running Day.** The GWSR Station, Toddington, Gloucestershire GL54 5DT. Parking also available at Cheltenham Racecourse Park & Ride, a short walk to the station. Details: A C Shapcott, Rally Organiser e-mail: [ac.shapcott@btinternet.com](mailto:ac.shapcott@btinternet.com) Bus/sales stand entry forms will be posted on the Gloucestershire & Warwickshire website at [www.gwsr.com](http://www.gwsr.com) and can be obtained by following the link to Events 2017 and then Bus Rally.

## MUSEUMS

### The Llangollen Railway Classic Transport Weekend



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**SATURDAY 1st & SUNDAY 2nd JULY 2017**  
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Museum open: Wednesday's, Saturday's & Sundays: 10.30am to 4.30pm

**Rail Station Yard, Long Hanborough, OX29 8LA**  
**[www.oxfordbusmuseum.org.uk](http://www.oxfordbusmuseum.org.uk)**

### TRANSPORT Museum WYTHALL

Chapel Lane, Wythall,  
Worcestershire B47 6JX  
[www.wythall.org.uk](http://www.wythall.org.uk)

Tel: 01564 826471  
registered charity no 1167872

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during school  
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Wednesdays  
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see website timetable  
for exact dates

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#### FATHERS' DAY SUNDAY 18th JUNE

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27th & 28th AUGUST

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## The Last Years of the Rear-entrance Double-decker

AUTHOR Mike Rhodes | PUBLISHER Venture Publications | 112 pages sbk | ISBN 1905304 | PRICE £20.00

We absolutely love this book, though much of its territory has been covered before.

However, the title allows the author to include everything from a 1954 Southdown Leyland PD2/12 to (think about it!) a 'New' Routemaster.

So much information is crammed in here, from a full listing of the dates when the last rear-engined buses left service with operators from Merthyr Tydfil to Madrid.

The photographs are 95 per cent excellent and we can't remember having seen any of them in other publications.

The coverage is extensive,

and there are some super rear shots which publishers often tend to shy away from.

Interestingly the book tells that no back-loading buses were ever painted in PTE liveries.

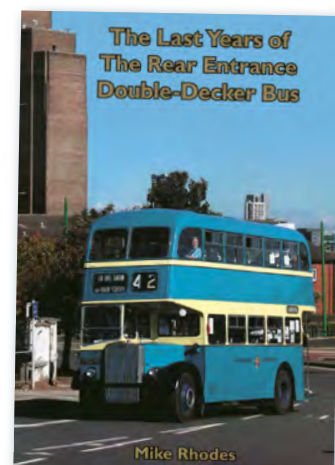
A rare picture depicts Samuel Ledgard AEC Regent V, registration 1953 U in the livery of West Yorkshire Road Car, which had taken over 'Sammy's Blue Buses' and painted this one red. There is some excellent coverage of London Transport AEC Routemasters and their subsequent owners.

The design of the book isn't over inspiring and we could question putting a modern

photo of a preserved bus on the cover, though there is nothing wrong with the subject matter or the picture itself. It's just that there are so many other great pictures to chose from.

All results in an enjoyable book that is fun to look through, whether you gleefully decide something is omitted, then discover it isn't, or as an excellent piece of reference material. Or just revel in all those lovely pictures.

We can't help but think this book, with its comprehensive coverage, would be an excellent present for a young enthusiast who wanted to know more



about older buses or has been taking too much of an unhealthy interest in Arriva Volvo B7Ls.

NICK LARKIN



## Scott's Greys of Darlington

AUTHOR Keith Kitching | 200 pages softback | PRICE £19.95

This book is the definitive history of Scott's Greys of Darlington — a coaching and haulage company, started by Fred Scott in 1919, and which finally closed its doors in 1992.

The coach company name derived from the famous Scottish Cavalry Regiment — The Royal Scots Greys. Fred Scott served with the Regiment in the First World War and partially adopted the name, for his new venture.

The author has been involved in the bus industry, as both conductor and driver, with United Automobile, Darlington Corporation and Scott's Greys. Keith currently owns an immaculately restored former Scott's Greys Austin K8/Plaxton Venturer.

The book is an A4 softback, 200 pages of quality coated paper. Keith has found almost 250 photos, of which 120 are in colour. It is an impressive effort and unlike many others today, printed in England.

The book has five chapters, each devoted to a separate period of the company's history. An appendix comprehensively lists the fleets of Scott's Grey's, in addition to GNE Motor Services and Browning's Coaches, both of which merged into Scott's Greys.

The company ran summer services to Blackpool, Whitby, Scarborough, Bridlington and Skegness. It also had a regular Trans-Pennine route to the Lake District, whilst excursions ran to Edinburgh, Spalding,

Whipsnade Zoo, Woburn Abbey, Chester and Stratford on Avon. In addition, the firm ran as an independent bus operator in Darlington, using mainly ex-London Transport RTLs and RTs.

As regards coaches, the companies seemed to avoid buying from certain mainstream chassis suppliers, concentrating instead on Bedford, Commer, Ford and Seddon chassis for Brownings and GNE Motor Services, whilst Scott's Greys bought following World War 2 many Bedfords plus Fords, a handful of Leyland Leopards and even a Fiat.

There was, of course, an exception: between 1954 and 1968, Scott's Greys bought 12 AEC Reliances.

Plaxtons, based at Scarborough, and Burlingham and Duple, both based in



Blackpool, received the great majority of orders from the three companies between 1950 and 1980, with Strachans and Caetano as minor suppliers.

This is a comprehensive, thoroughly researched and very well presented book. Highly recommended.

IAN WILLIAMSON





# Independent Bus Operators in Derbyshire

AUTHOR Neville Mercer | PUBLISHER Venture Publications |  
192 pages softback | ISBN 9781 9053 0 | PRICE £20.00

An utterly fascinating look at the incredible variety of operators and their vehicles which Derbyshire once boasted.

A tome like this could only be written by someone who has carried out the most meticulous research and made a massive effort to find people and pictures. They would also need a genuine love for the region and probably have personal experience of some of the operators covered.

The author scores top marks on all these points. Operators in action between 1950 and 1980 are the focus of this book, but there are some welcome crossings of these boundaries.

Even in the 1960s a wonderful variety was still to be experienced, and we are introduced to a world many young enthusiasts would never believe existed. Local operators served their communities in a way that the major groups could never sustain without a massive loss. Many of their vehicles were time expired when they were bought but kept running by brilliant engineers.

The author most importantly states that the passengers often relied on operators for 'far more than a seat on a bus'. Drivers and conductors would willingly do shopping and transport newspapers. Postmen used the bus to get to outlying districts.

One of the many jaw-dropping items in the book is a 1929 letter from the proprietor

of E. Williams & Co Ltd of Matlock Bath to its eventual new owner the North Western Road Car Co. This pointed out that there was no need for a vehicle of 'really good class' on the service. 'The users are all of the farming community and all sorts of articles are carried such as calves in sacks(!), fowls in crates, rabbits, eggs and farm implements, besides produce.

Operators covered range from those with just a couple of vehicles to major concerns, some virtually unknown, others of legend and one even still with us today.

Hulley of Baslow enthralled enthusiasts with numerous secondhand purchases over the years from Sentinels to Guy Otters, to several of Midland Red motorway coaches and to Sheffield Leyland Leopards.

Hulleys was sold to J. H. Woollicroft & Sons of Darley Dale, better known as Silver Service, which invested heavily in its new acquisition, rather unfortunately with some deeply unreliable former Liverpool Leyland Panthers which sullied the operator's reputation.

The Hulleys name was wound down but survives today because the stage-carriage side of the business was sold to two directors — there had been massive arguments in the Woollicroft family, some wanting to concentrate purely on coaches and other keeping the buses going.

## Independent Bus Operators in Derbyshire



Super Prestige Number 38  
Neville Mercer

Silver Service ceased to trade after a court petition from its fuel supplier, a highly inappropriate end to a company with such a great history, and some incredible vehicles, many bought new and no more famous than the still surviving 1934 AEC Q, ARA 475. One of the book's most extraordinary photos shows this with a Trent Leyland Atlantean, the crew of which are sitting relaxed in front of their rather more common steed.

We would need a four-part review to thoroughly cover this excellent book, but there are many extremely important and rare photos, including a colour section.

Felix of Stanley, which only left us in 2014 is covered, as is Naylor of South Normanton, which sold out to Trent in 1956. Truman of Shirebrook

which bought new Guy double-deckers and operated WG 9519, the only Leyland Panda (a six-wheeler twin-steer, a bit like a Gnu six-wheeler) which had Alexander bodywork.

Although the author is keen to dispel myths, he couldn't help include the not totally confirmed story that Blue Bus of Willington fleet flagship Willowbrook-bodied Daimler COG5 GNU 750 was hidden in a haystack during World War 2 to avoid requisition. Many vehicles were destroyed in the 1976 fire of course.

What a fascinating book, containing so much information, some very important photos and wonderful vehicles, so many near misses for preservation as well as a few successes.

Here is a passport to another lost world — imagine asking the driver of Trent Barton's Mango service if they wouldn't mind picking up some eggs and a copy of the *Daily Mail* for you!

NICK LARKIN

★★★★☆

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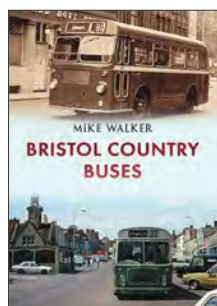
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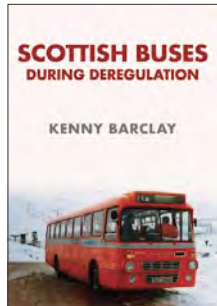
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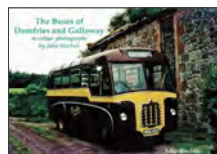
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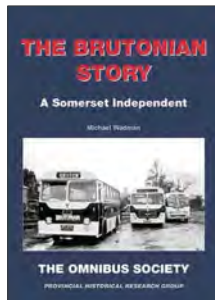
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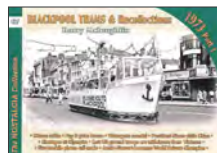


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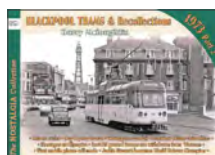
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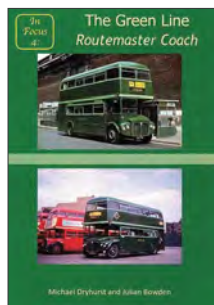
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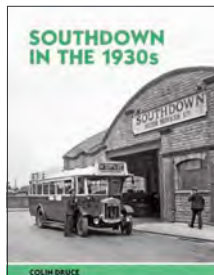
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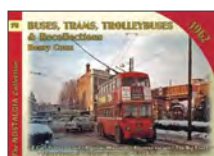
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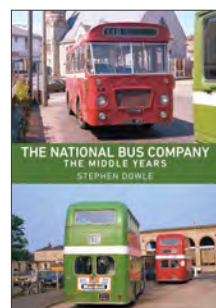
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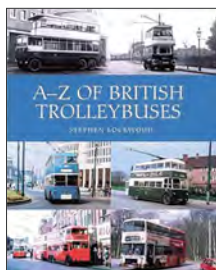
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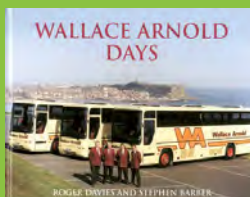
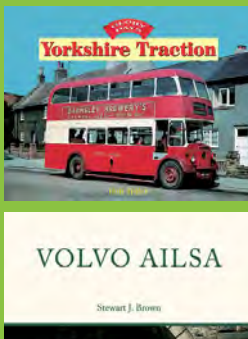
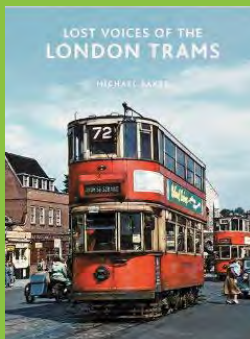
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